

Diplomatic blow to Israel mission

Hurd shunned by angry Palestinians

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

DOUGLAS Hurd was yesterday shunned by leading Palestinians for allegedly saying he was "absolutely opposed to a Palestinian state" as the solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. The foreign secretary said he was misquoted.

Twenty-eight Palestinians cancelled a meeting with Mr Hurd and instead held an angry press conference, denouncing British policy.

The rebuff was a further blow to Mr Hurd, who had angered Israeli leaders before he arrived in Jerusalem by condemning the killing of 21 Arabs at the Temple Mount.

The incident yesterday accentuated Western difficulties in the wake of the killings, in spite of Britain's successful efforts to achieve a compromise UN Security Council resolution. Diplomats said that had proved unsatisfactory to both Israel and the Arabs, and there was confusion over Western "linkage" between the Palestinian question and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The Palestinian leaders yesterday said Britain had altered its stance on the Palestine Liberation Organisation and had engineered a resolution

that lacked "commitment to concrete and effective action to set in motion a genuine political process capable of achieving real peace". The Foreign Office, and Mr Hurd in particular, are regarded by Israel as pro-Arab.

Mr Hurd said last night that British policy had not altered "one jot or tittle". Anyone searching for middle ground was bound to be accused of bias by extremists on either side, he said. Attention must not be distracted from the main priority: the removal of President Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. That could then be followed by progress on the "unfinished business" of the Palestinian question.

Mr Hurd again urged Israel to find a way of accepting the UN secretary-general's mission to investigate the Temple Mount shootings. Israel objects to interference in its sovereignty and will publish its own findings next week.

Hard questions were being asked yesterday about why no one on the foreign secretary's staff or at the British embassy in Tel Aviv had alerted him to the fact that the first item on the Israeli television news on Tuesday evening was a report that Mr Hurd had expressed strong opposition to a future state of Palestine during private meetings with members of the Knesset. British officials did not issue a denial until 11 o'clock yesterday morning, by which time Palestinians had announced their boycott.

The official statement said: "The British position is well known: it favours self-determination for the Palestinian people. Whether or not that leads to a Palestinian state is a matter for them and for negotiation. It is very regrettable that leading Palestinians should have taken this incorrect information and used it as a reason for calling off the talks." The Palestinians were "missing the opportunity to put the views of their people to someone who has consistently stressed the importance of their cause in discussions with the Israeli government."

In a statement of their own, the Palestinian leaders praised Mr Hurd's "courageous and principled stance" in defending Palestinian human rights and self-determination, but accused Britain of backing away from recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. They demanded an upgrading of the diplomatic status of the Palestine mission in London.

Mr Eliahu Ben-Elissar, chairman of the foreign affairs committee, told Israel Radio

that Mr Hurd had said that Britain "did not support the idea of a Palestinian state". Mr Hurd described this as inaccurate, adding: "It is inconceivable that I would use a private meeting at the Knesset to announce a major change in British policy."

In the heated atmosphere after the Temple Mount shootings, the smallest remark is apt to be magnified. Mr Hurd ruefully acknowledged this by saying that he had realised during his short visit to what extent Jerusalem was "a cockpit of tense and conflicting emotions".

The Anglo-Israeli relationship has often been a bruising experience for visiting British ministers. Yesterday's debacle revived memories of the 1983 visit to Gaza by David Mellor, then a Foreign Office minister, when he raised Israeli hackles by upbraiding an army officer.

Mr Hurd said he had refrained from repeating in public criticism of Israel he had voiced before arriving because he thought it better to make the same points to Israeli leaders "quietly, not in a shouting voice" and to listen to the Israeli replies in the same spirit.

He said he did not regard the "shemoozie" at Tel Aviv airport on his arrival, when arrival statements were cancelled at the last moment, as a mark of Israeli displeasure. He hoped that he had been able to put "the other side of the argument" to Israeli leaders "in a manner which may eventually prove persuasive".

Israel and Britain agreed fully that the priority was reversing Iraqi aggression, and Israel deserved praise for "wisely keeping a low profile" in the Gulf crisis. He said the PLO had made a "serious mistake" by supporting Iraq, but a lasting settlement would still require the reconciliation of Israeli and Palestinian nationalisms through Israeli talks with "representative Palestinians".

Arab leaders objected to this, saying it suggested Britain was supporting the Shamir government's concept of a non-PLO alternative leadership in the occupied territories. Mr Hurd said a Middle East settlement must include secure borders for Israel as well as the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

Chastened Hurd, page 10
Daisy, page 14
Leading article, page 15

Shake-up of legal aid to end income trap

By FRANCIS GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE who cannot afford to go to law but are too wealthy for legal aid may be made eligible for public funds to pursue their claims under the biggest shake-up of the legal aid scheme since it was set up 40 years ago.

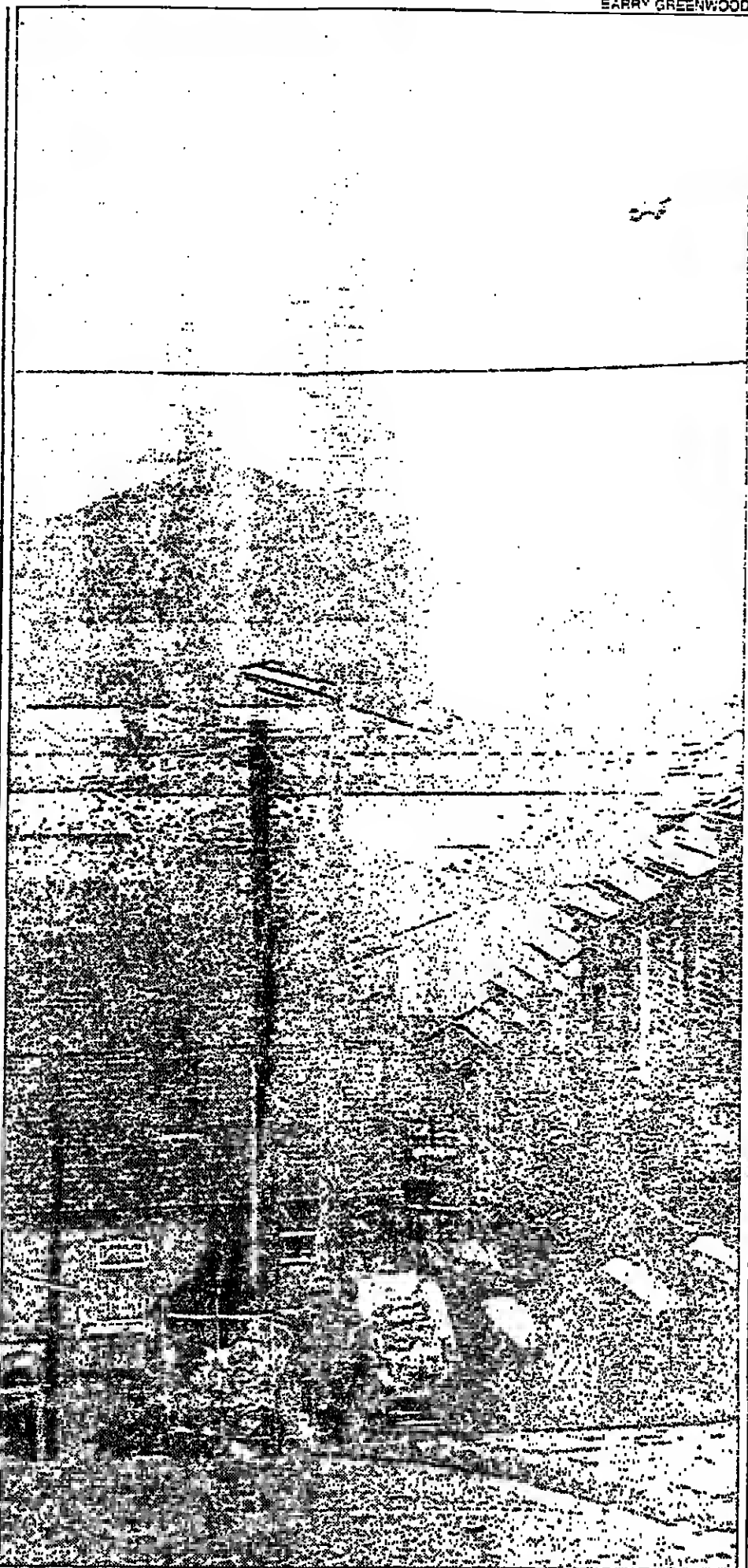
Officials at the Lord Chancellor's Department are studying ways of extending the scope of the legal aid scheme to people who fall within the so-called "middle income trap." For the first time, civil legal aid for some kinds of claim, such as personal injuries, may be made available to everyone, regardless of means,

but subject to paying a contribution towards the costs of the case.

However, it is likely to become harder to obtain aid for divorce, one of the biggest drains on the civil legal aid bill. New, more rigorous tests for granting legal aid in divorce proceedings may be devised: one option would be to oblige couples to go through conciliation procedures by giving "last resort" legal aid only for those disputes that have to be settled by the courts.

Continued on page 26, col 4

Tougher divorce, page 4



Dowhill prospect: the Birkenhead shipyard facing closure if no buyer is found

Cammell Laird up for sale

By RONALD FAUX

THE Cammell Laird shipbuilding yard at Birkenhead is to be put up for sale and closed if no buyer can be found, it was announced yesterday by VSEL, its owners. Immediate redundancies among the 2,100 workforce are expected after cutbacks in defence contracts.

The yard has a contract worth £200 million for three SSK submarines for the Royal Navy, which will be completed in 1993. But Noel Davies, VSEL chief executive, said yesterday that the yard, where ships have been made since 1828, no longer had a feasible future in warship building. "It is a sad day, but this offers the best possible prospect for the company and its employees," he said.

Cammell Laird became a subsidiary of VSEL in 1985. The warship specialists, based in Barrow-in-Furness, took over from British Shipbuilders immediately before privatisation.

The announcement was greeted with sadness but little surprise by unions at the yard.

Parliament, page 9
Political sketch, page 26
Comment, page 29

Thatcher orders new three Rs tests

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND DAVID TYTLER

THE Prime Minister told John MacGregor, the education secretary, last night that changes should be made to the compulsory tests that are to be introduced for all seven-year-olds next May.

Margaret Thatcher is understood to have sought the changes after reading proposals for the reading, writing and arithmetic tests. Final details will be announced within the next few days.

Before the hour-long meeting, government sources had said there was "some difficulty" over the "mechanics" of testing. But when he emerged from 10 Downing Street yesterday, Mr MacGregor indicated that these had been resolved. He said the meeting had been "amicable" and that he would make an announcement after he had put together some final thoughts on advice from the Schools Examinations and Assessment Council.

The meeting had been arranged after Mr MacGregor telephoned Mrs Thatcher at the end of last week's Conservative conference in Bournemouth. He was apparently concerned that she had supported education vouchers without his knowledge and suggested a meeting.

The resultant talks were described as "across the board" and included the vouchers question. They centred, however, on the national curriculum tests, which Mrs Thatcher said should be simple but convincing. The education secretary has already streamlined the examination council's proposals after a

Continued on page 26, col 6

Leading article and Letters, page 15

Auditors say 4m poll tax cases likely

By RAY CLANCY

A DIRECT conflict was brewing last night between the Audit Commission and the environment department over the impact of the community charge. According to a commission report to be published next month, up to four million people face court action for not paying poll tax when the whole system is in danger of degenerating because of huge computer software problems.

The report contradicts the latest government figures. Michael Portillo, the local government minister, said yesterday that, despite a few teething problems, 85 per cent of chargepayers had already made contributions, and the non-payment campaign had failed. He told the Institute of Revenue, Rating and Valuation conference in Scarborough that some councillors had been actively discouraging payments, but all the indications pointed to the majority of the people in Britain liable for community charge now accepting that they had to pay.

The commission paints a picture of council officers nationally battling to keep up with a tight legislative timetable. Yet weaknesses in the system have resulted in local authorities not bothering to collect money from those eligible for rebates because of the cost involved and disincentives to maintain the poll-tax register, according to details from the report, revealed today in the local government

magazine. *Municipal Journal*. However, the commission shows that technology shortfalls are the main problem in England and Wales. The survey of more than 50 councils found that 70 per cent of them had not issued bills by the recommended date at the end of March. 75 per cent did not receive their billing software in time, and 30 per cent have failed to exchange information which could have helped with teething problems.

Software problems were the major cause of delayed billing... late delivery meant that software could not be adequately tested. The quality of software was as much of a problem as its delivery," the draft report says. One London borough is unable to process changes in its poll-tax register and therefore unable to bill new chargepayers because its software is not yet working.

Researchers also found that, by the beginning of September, halfway through the financial year, six million chargepayers in England, one in six of those eligible to pay, had made no contribution. On previous experience under the rating system, one third pay up after a reminder, the report says, indicating that four to five million summonses are likely to be issued. Another third will probably settle at the summons stage, leaving three to four million liability orders likely to be made.

Student fees, page 7

Union forges new links at GCHQ

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE government is facing growing embarrassment over the in-house staff federation, which replaced traditional civil service unions ejected from Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham.

The GCHQ Staff Federation appears likely to be certified as a fully independent trade union, and it has formed strong links outside GCHQ, with the EETPU electricians. At the time of the GCHQ union ban in 1984, the prime minister insisted that the national activities of civil service unions had made a ban necessary.

Concern over the status of the staff federation has become so great that Sir Robin Butler, the cabinet secretary and head of the home civil service, has met GCHQ

management and federation leaders on the issue, within the past month, in an unprecedented visit to the Cheltenham listening station.

Matthew Wake, the government's Certification Officer, refused the staff federation a full certificate of independence, last year, on the grounds that GCHQ's director, in effect, had a veto on the federation's activities.

But the federation is appealing against that decision through the Employment Appeals Tribunal, pointing to a rules change at its conference which now allows it, after a referendum, to affiliate to outside bodies.

Leaders of civil service unions, anxious to return to GCHQ, may now raise the issue with the Cabinet Office and the Treasury.

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INSIDE

Trainer held after doping

Dermot Browne, a Lambourn racehorse trainer, was being questioned last night by South Yorkshire police after the doping of two horses at the Doncaster St Leger meeting last month.

Browne was champion amateur National Hunt jockey in the early 1980s. Police who travelled to Lambourn yesterday said that a man had been arrested. Page 40

Petrol price war

A petrol price war started in earnest last night as Shell cut its four-star by 8.6p a gallon and BP responded by adding 4.5p to a 4.1p cut made earlier in the day. Page 2

Hospital penalty

Money allocated for reducing Britain's 900,000-patient hospital waiting lists will be withdrawn from health authorities failing to reach present targets, the NHS management executive said. Page 3

Nuclear fund

Sir James Goldsmith, the multi-millionaire who stunned the City by giving up his business career to concentrate on environmental issues, is to fund a nationwide campaign against Britain's nuclear industry. Page 4

Lockerbie claim

Two of the 259 passengers on the Pan Am jet blown up over Lockerbie could have survived the 31,000ft fall and might have lived with immediate expert attention, a professor of forensic science said. Page 7

Yeltsin attack

Committees and commissions of the Soviet parliament were silent last night on their response to President Gorbachev's moves to a market economy, but Boris Yeltsin leapt to the attack, apparently seeking a place in the top leadership. Page 13

Power from sea

British mining engineers are working to harvest electricity using the temperature difference between the seas' warm surface and deep polar waters found in tropical and sub-tropical depths 1,000 metres. Science, page 20

INDEX

Arts	23
Births, marriages, deaths	17
Chess	7
Court & social	18
Crosswords	17, 28
Health	18-19
Law report	15
Leading articles	15
Letters	15
Obituary	16
Science & Technology	20-21
Sport	36-40
TV & Radio	25
Weather	26



Lady Blatch: finished faster than she began

Peeress at full throttle brings Lords to a halt

By PETER MULLIGAN

PROCEEDINGS in the House of Lords came to a halt yesterday after the quickfire delivery of a statement by Lady Blatch, a junior environment minister, disturbed the afternoon calm and confounded many peers.

The normally sedate upper chamber adjourned for 25 minutes following complaints that its members had been put in a "totally impossible position". Observers of procedure believe that a similar adjournment has taken place only once or twice in the last 10 years.

Peers protested that they could not assess her speech without a written copy in

front of them while Lord Shackleton, son of the famous explorer, asked if she could read it more slowly.

Television monitors around the building bore the words "adjourned during pleasure" - normally a reference to a meal break - but it was apparent that pleasure was not much involved.

The subject of her statement was the cost and staffing level of the reorganisation of the Nature Conservancy Council which is to be split up into separate agencies.

Lady Blatch, aged 53, appointed earlier this year, began by telling the House that she wished to bring it up to date on events that had occurred over the summer.

She then set out on a brisk reading of the script in front of her. Copies which later reached the press box showed it to be six pages of closely-typed script.

She had reached a little over half way and was responding to concern about the reorganisation expressed in a letter to *The Times* by Sir William Wilkinson, chairman of the Nature Conservancy Council, when the interruption began.

Peers were stung to protest at her declaration that three consultants' reports about the reorganisation - which they might have used in the debate - had been put in their library last week.

Lord McIntosh of Har-

gey, from the Labour front bench, commented on the complexity of her speech. While she had been personally extremely courteous, he said, it was "physically impossible" to react to her words in the absence of a copy of her text.

Lady Blatch resumed her statement, missing out half a paragraph, and hurried on to the end, appearing to some to conclude faster than she began.

Lord Shackleton, who speaks from the Labour benches, supported the demand by his front bench for an adjournment. Lord Denham, the leader of House, immediately acquiesced.

Further rise in unemployment expected as firms feel pinch

By Staff Reporters

TODAY'S unemployment figures are expected to show another increase. Economic forecasters expect the present unemployment total of 1,654 million to rise by about another 25,000, giving the fifth straight month of increases since the figure started to rise in April.

Growing unemployment is an inevitable effect of the squeeze on demand of the government policy of high interest rates. The increase shows that the policy is working. It is also hurting, however, as companies, local job offices and unions throughout the country are showing.

Economic growth in the late Eighties has been strongest in the South-East. Employment has risen sharply there in manufacturing and services. It is also the region in which some effects of the squeeze are being felt the hardest.

The Thames Valley, strung out along the M4 corridor, and encompassing towns such as Bracknell, Slough, New-

bury and Swindon, has been among the best economic performers. Now, however, unemployment is steadily rising.

According to local economic surveys, output in the area is down for the first time in three years. Labour shortages have eased, and clerical and skilled manual jobs, previously vacant, can now be filled. Unemployment is up from 2.1 per cent to about 2.4 per cent in the last quarter and, although the rise is small, it is significant that it is happening at all in an area like the South-East.

Over in the Medway area, unemployment, at about 4 per cent, is higher, but it is rising at about the same pace. In areas such as Thanet, which traditionally have higher unemployment, the jobless total is already up to 7.7 per cent and rising. North of London, in Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes, the position is more complicated. Many companies still have staff shortages and are having to pay high wages to try to ease them. But redundancies have also been rising and many

companies are trying to increase cost efficiency by cutting staff.

In Norwich, unemployment is also rising. During the next quarter, 21 per cent of manufacturing companies expect to reduce their workforces, up from an expectation of 11 per cent. There are, however, still shortages of skilled manual workers.

In the service sector, the position is worse, although employment service managers believe that a number of proposed schemes will increase jobs, such as 600 from a £125 million new office and retail development.

Employers in the North-West admit to "difficult times", but avoid describing the downturn as a recession. Perhaps the most potent symbol of unemployment pressure in the region is the appearance on Liverpool city council's agenda of redundancy schemes for its workforce to help to avoid a £19 million deficit.

The North West TUC described the

overall unemployment position in the region as "dreadful and deteriorating", with lay-offs and closures across the board, from breweries, engineering companies, the chemical industry and firms relying on defence-related contracts. "It is nearly as bad as the position in the mid-Eighties," a TUC official said.

About the only growth was in tourism. Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Industry reported that trading opportunities in the immediate future look less promising. The chamber's latest survey, covering 522 firms employing 100,000, showed that in the past three months, half had maintained workforce at the same level, 27 per cent had expanded and 21 per cent had contracted.

In the Midlands, the number of people unemployed in Coventry and Birmingham, where there is an emphasis on engineering, rose by 245 and 1,294 respectively between July and August. In Coventry, 6.3 per cent of the workforce

was jobless and the figure in Birmingham rose to 7.3 per cent. The new statistics are expected to show another rise.

Tony Bradley, of Birmingham Chamber of Industry and Commerce, said: "Home and export orders are both down. It is not good, but it is not a disaster. Recession is not a word I like to use, but in jobs and falling orders, the signs are there that it is becoming increasingly difficult. There will be some casualties."

A survey of manufacturing prospects for the region showed the number of companies reporting that export orders were down rose from 23 per cent in June to 35 per cent last month. There were similar figures for the home market.

In Wales, government programmes have helped, but in Aberdare, in south Wales, the closure of old coal plants and mines is pushing men on to the job market. Adult male unemployment is now about 18 per cent. Some light electronics companies, which were supposed to supply replacement jobs, are

now also losing staff.

The slowdown in the economy appears to be the least marked in Scotland than in the United Kingdom as a whole. Unemployment has remained at slightly over 200,000 since spring. The May figure showed the biggest drop since the autumn of 1989 and increases during the following three months were small.

In Northern Ireland, the economy will be insulated to some extent by public sector expenditure that accounts for about two-thirds of gross domestic product in the province and by the huge annual subsidy paid from the government. However, Dr Graham Gudgin, director of the independent Northern Ireland Economic Research Centre, estimates that over the next year the unemployment rate will rise from 13.5 per cent to just over 14 per cent. This still makes Northern Ireland by far the worst UK region in terms of unemployment, despite the fall in the past three years from about 18 per cent.

Labour in attack on training cuts

By Philip Bassett
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Labour party said yesterday that a leaked government document clearly indicated the damage being done to the employment department's training programme by cuts in funding.

The attack came as it became clear at Westminster that Michael Howard, the employment secretary, had settled his department's funding for training in talks with Norman Lamont, chief secretary to the Treasury, avoiding the star chamber process of settling this year's public spending round.

An internal employment department document from the London operational office of the Training Agency said there were already "sizeable waiting lists" for places on the Youth Training Scheme, and that "the reduction in funds has resulted in some employers being reluctant to take on special needs trainees".

It said that some work placement shortages were being reported and that further budget cuts would mean the loss of more training providers.

Although it was too early to say whether the quality of government training had been affected by budget cuts, training providers were cutting corners in the training offered.

The document, a memo to Ian Randall, who is responsible for further education in the Training Agency, is a local one, but Labour said that it painted a general picture.

Tony Blair, shadow employment secretary, said: "This memo confirms all we have claimed about the devastating damage done to training by the cuts already implemented and the absolute necessity of preventing any further cuts next year."

The employment department confirmed that the document was genuine, but said that the government was totally committed to its guarantee of a training place for every 16 to 18-year-old school leaver who could not find a job, and for other priority groups.

The department would not disclose how much extra Mr Howard had obtained, but said it was convinced there would be resources for future training.

● Action Trust, part of the Campaign for Work pressure group, releases evidence today of training underfunding, and says that the employment department needs an extra £250 million this year to fund training properly.

Calls for pay rises above inflation are 'destructive'

By Tim Jones, EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

UNION leaders calling for above inflation pay rises were described yesterday as "reckless and destructive" and were told that 230,000 jobs could be lost for every pay rise of 1 per cent more than prices.

Michael Howard, employment secretary, delivering one of the government's strongest attacks yet on the wave of high pay claims, also blamed employers for not resisting large wage demands. His warning was dismissed, however, by union leaders who said their members could not be expected to suffer the consequences of government mismanagement of the economy.

Norman Willis, general secretary of the TUC, said: "Michael Howard may talk of reckless union leaders, yet it is the government's mishandling of the economy which has given us double digit inflation and rising unemployment. For them now to appeal for wage restraint is buck-passing on a massive scale. It is not a policy, it is panic."

Mr Howard, speaking in London, was reflecting growing government concern over high wage claims and settlements and their effect on unemployment, which official figures to be published today will show has risen for the sixth month in succession. He said that what could be a "golden decade" for Britain was in danger of being jeopardised by calls for pay increases that considerably outpaced inflation.

"At this crucial time, such talk could scarcely be more reckless and destructive. The hard fact is that too many unions are more concerned about money than jobs," he said. "They prefer to fight for increases for employed workers now, rather than look to the future. They are far too often prepared to put jobs at risk."

Some employers were equally short-sighted. "They sometimes prefer to concede large pay settlements which should be resisted," he said.

He said that too many unions and employers still worshipped at the false shrine of the "going rate", a settlement level that had been reached by some and which was taken as a purely arbitrary

goal. "This phenomenon tends to ratchet up both the initial demands of unions and the figure at which employers are willing to settle. It takes no account whatsoever of the trading or competitive position of the firm in which they work, or, worse still, of what that firm might have to do in order to meet the claim."

Gavin Laird, general secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, said that unions would not take responsibility for a government economic policy which was in tatters. "We have just negotiated a 16.6 per cent rise for 1,600 of our workers. We would not have done that if a single job was at risk."

John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB general union, said the minister had rejected a suggestion for a co-ordinated wage policy, designed to avoid leap-frogging claims, to be worked out as part of a national agenda. "We challenge him to come to the next meeting of the National Economic Development Council to put forward his plans."

Mr Howard outlined the initiatives being taken by the government to improve skills training and said there was no point in creating and sustaining a Rolls-Royce training framework if, at the end, there were no jobs for trainees.

● The North-South divide will widen as the government's efforts to stem inflation bite, with unemployment rising in the North, according to a report published today.

The report, by the Employment Institute, says that the long-term economic prospects for the nation will suffer if steps are not taken immediately to bridge the North-South divide. David Blackaby and Neil Manning of University College, Swansea, the authors of the report, recommend more funds for Training and Enterprise Councils in the North, improvements in regional infrastructure and greater efforts to reduce regional concentrations of long-term unemployment. "Britain needs to enter the Single European Market as a competitive economy as a divided two-tier British economy is unlikely to thrive after 1992."



An apple a day: John Gummer, the agriculture minister, at the launch yesterday of the main English apple and pear season, where he urged growers to take advantage of the 35 per cent government grants available for the next three years for the replanting of orchards. Mr Gummer said the call made in a report by the British Medical Association on Tuesday for a new regulatory system governing the use of pesticides was not justified by the findings of the report alone. "I don't think there is any other country in the world where the rules are as carefully designed to protect the public, and where the testing of the safety of pesticides is as exact and careful," he said.

Paying for poor car security

THOUSANDS of motorists could be forced to pay for their car's poor security record through higher insurance premiums (Kevin Eason writes). The Association of British Insurers has produced plans to double the number of insurance group ratings currently used for vehicles to penalise those cars with a bad record of thefts and break-ins.

Cars with high quality locks or alarm systems will be rated into lower insurance groups. But drivers with cars that have proved easy to break into will be rated higher, costing their owners more in annual payments.

The move comes as the industry faces record losses from car crime. Figures dis-

closed to *The Times* yesterday show that insurance industry payments for losses on car crime are up by 23 per cent so far this year and will probably cost as much as £400 million by the end of the year.

Tony Baker, the association's general insurance manager, said that the decision to extend the number of vehicle insurance groups from nine to 18 was to help focus attention on the cars which have a bad security record. The groupings are expected to reflect a league table of cars most vulnerable to crime being drawn up by the Home Office and the Department of Transport for David Waddington, the Home Secretary.

Mr Waddington is threaten-

ing to publish his table in April because manufacturers have done little to promote vehicle security while a big effort has gone into improving speed and performance.

The association has passed on its concern over the rapid increase of car thefts and break-ins, which now account for a quarter of all recorded crime, to Mr Waddington at the Home Office standing conference on crime prevention. Mr Baker said: "Theft is only one element, but when that is rising by 23 per cent a year then the alarm bells start ringing. The latest crime figures are extremely worrying and this move is part of the effort to get to grips with what is going on."

Mr Waddington is threaten-

Shell's surprise 8.6p price cut sparks pump war

By Kevin Eason, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

PETROL prices started to tumble last night as two of Britain's biggest oil companies fired the first shots in what could be a war on filling station forecourts. Shell cut the price of its petrol by 8.6p a gallon (1.9p a litre) to 226.9p (49.9p) for four-star and 213.2p (46.9p) for unleaded in a move that took its competitors by surprise and sparked a round of furious activity to gain a price advantage.

BP, which earlier in the day had announced cuts of 4.1p a gallon, reacted immediately by taking off another 4.5p to make a total reduction of 8.6p to match Shell. Jet, traditionally a company with an aggressive pricing policy, was also caught out. The company lowered prices on its 1,100 forecourts by 4p on Tuesday but was forced to cut by an extra 4p last night to keep its four-star slightly below that of Shell and BP, at about 224.6p.

A Jet spokesman said: "We had to move quickly as the market is now changing rapidly. We do not want to be left behind as we aim to offer the best prices we can."

Esso and Texaco moved prices down by about 4p - not enough to keep up with Shell's decision. Total, however, cut its prices by 9p a gallon.

The activity signalled the start of what could be a price war as the big companies, jostle for the best price position, with further reductions expected over the next few days. Industry experts were predicting even greater cuts in the regions where competition often forces discounts.

Shell's petrol prices have tumbled by 12.7p in less than a fortnight and promise to fall further from the peak of almost 240p when worries over petrol supplies were at their height during the Gulf conflict. The big companies have been encouraged to act by the weakening of bulk petrol prices on the Rotterdam spot market. Prices have dropped from £236 a tonne on October 1 to £202 yesterday.

Irish group admits to killing

THE Ulster Freedom Fighters yesterday claimed responsibility for the death of a Roman Catholic shot dead on Tuesday night.

The group said it killed Dermot Anthony McGuinness, aged 41, who was shot from a passing car in north Belfast as he returned from an off licence. They claimed he was a member of the Irish People's Liberation Organisation. Mr McGuinness's family strenuously denied the claim.

● Two IRA men were carrying guns when the SAS shot them dead last week, a judge at the High Court in Belfast heard yesterday. The disclosure was the first official confirmation that Dessie Grew and Martin McCaughey were armed when they were ambushed.

Young recalled

Lord Young of Gifford, the former trade and industry secretary, will be recalled by the Commons trade and industry committee next month to explain "the sweeteners" offered to British Aerospace in the takeover of Rover. Professor Roland Smith, BAe chairman, will also be asked to give more evidence.

Harrier crashes

An RAF Harrier pilot returning from a Nato low-flying exercise over Denmark escaped with minor injuries yesterday after his aircraft crashed near Froslevs in Jutland. He ejected 2,000ft above Limfjorden fjord. The jet struck a power line and crashed near a farm and houses on Mors island.

WALLACE HEATON

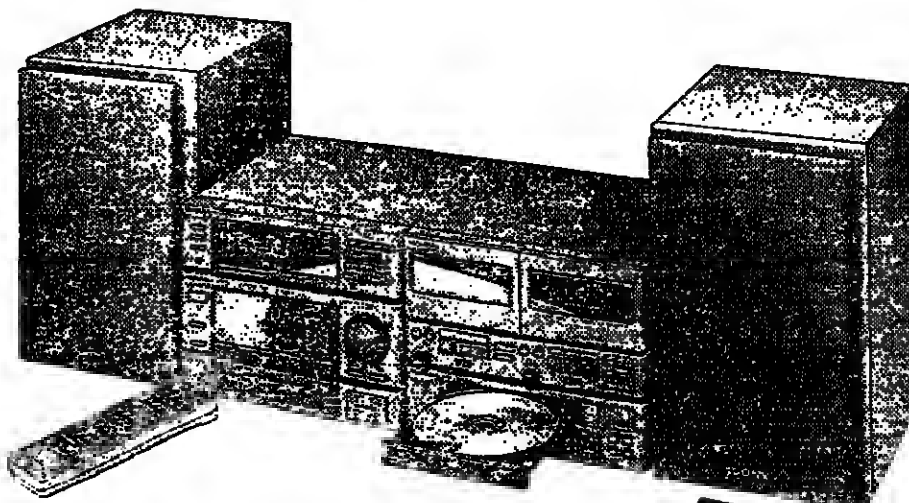
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Cranes bow to closure threat facing heart of shipbuilding

By RONALD FAUX

SHIPBUILDING has dominated Birkenhead for more than a century. The cranes of the Cammell Laird yard arch against the skyline signalling the industry on which the town has grown. A long line of famous warships and merchant vessels has taken shape on Merseyside.

The news that the yard may close unless a buyer is found, was greeted with little surprise yesterday. That heavy cuts in defence spending would rebound on a business that relied entirely on military orders had been half expected.

Closure of the yard would be a disaster for Birkenhead and the Wirral area. Cammell Laird spends about £50 million a year, half of it on wages for the workforce of more than 2,000. A further 2,000 local workers are engaged in contract services for the yard.

The workforce, many of whom have shares in the VSEL consortium that owns the yard, had grown in anticipation of more orders, but these are unlikely to materialise now that the cold war has ended.

In July Tom King, the defence secretary, announced that the submarine fleet would be cut from 27 to 16 and a future destroyer/frigate fleet would be reduced from the present 48 to 40 under the

government's "options for change" defence review. The decision on submarines appeared to indicate that there would be no more orders for nuclear-powered "boats" at least for the foreseeable future.

Noel Davies, chief executive of VSEL, said: "As a citizen I am delighted there should be a peace bonus, but it doesn't half make life difficult for the defence industry. The Gulf crisis may cause some rethinking but I do not believe it will change things so far as Cammell Laird is concerned."

Management and workers were confident that the yard could switch from military to civilian contracts without any large-scale adaptation. The workforce had a reputation for completing contracts on time. Facilities were modernised in the 1970s specifically for merchant ship production.

Mr Davies said the change to warships in 1985 with the VSEL take-over had been an arbitrary decision by British Shipbuilders. Until the defence review, the construction programme for the Royal Navy had been enough to keep all the warship yards busy, including Cammell Laird.

The new position gives warship builders a number of disadvantages. For us to build merchant vessels would mean having to use someone else's

designs without knowledge of the market." Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, agreed that outside warship building, VSEL did not have the skills to ensure a long-term future for the yard.

"I am not criticising Vickers. Without them the yard might have closed years ago."

Ken Morris, convener of shop stewards, said "Heads are down at the moment but it is important we get them back up again," he said.

Comment, page 29

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Penalty for failure to stem rise in waiting lists

By JILL SHERMAN, SOCIAL SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

HEALTH authorities will have to forfeit money allocated for reducing waiting lists if they fail to reach preset targets, the health service management executive said yesterday.

The move underlines the government's determination to cut waiting lists which are now at an all-time high with 960,000 patients needing hospital admission. Of these, 200,000 have been waiting more than a year and 80,000 for more than two years.

Michael Malone-Lee, director of operations on the National Health Service management executive, said that the government was not getting a good enough return for the money spent on its waiting list initiative. Speaking at a conference held by the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, Mr Malone-Lee said that last year the government had earmarked £34 million to reduce lists but the number of people waiting for hospital admission in England rose by 5 per cent.

A £5 million project to tackle the 43 longest lists in 22 districts, headed by John Yates from the Health Management Centre in Birmingham had, however, halved the number of people waiting for more than a year. The remaining £26 million achieved only a 13.6 per cent reduction in long waiting lists in the districts targeted.

"If there is money to be allocated to regions next year, which I am sure there will be, we must have a much better return for the money," Mr Malone-Lee said. Last year, he said, Mersey region had reduced the number of people waiting for treatment for more than a year by 40 per cent. "We know it can be done."

Duncan Nichol, the NHS chief executive, has already told managers that he expects all regions to set targets to achieve substantial reductions in waiting times. By the end of next year nobody should be waiting more than two years for treatment, he said. He has also made clear that managers will risk losing performance-related pay if they failed to achieve them.

Policeman cleared of sex assault

A POLICE constable was cleared yesterday of indecently assaulting a woman colleague while on night patrol.

A jury at Shrewsbury crown court took less than an hour to find Richard Gurgil not guilty of indecently assaulting Karen Clowes, a constable aged 21, and of assault causing her actual bodily harm. Miss Clowes had told the court that Mr Gurgil, who was stationed at Newcastle-under-Lyme, pulled her to the ground and kissed and fondled her after they had been called to round up some escaped cows.

Mr Gurgil, aged 26, of Miles End, Audley, Staffordshire, denied the allegations. He has been suspended since September and is now expected to have talks with senior officers about his future.

Vicar wins £4,000 damages

By PAUL WILKINSON

A CHURCH of England vicar who says he lost his job after being wrongly accused of indecently assaulting a 13-year-old boy won £4,000 damages from the police yesterday.

A High Court jury ruled that Essex police were wrong to detain Owen Leigh-Williams, the former vicar of St Andrew's church in Basildon, Essex, for almost two days in September 1986.

Mr Leigh-Williams, aged 57, who had his licence revoked by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1986, sued the chief constable of Essex for damages for the loss of his job and for mental stress and embarrassment. He said he was falsely imprisoned on two occasions, in October 1985 and September 1986, and blamed aggressive police questioning for the delay in clearing him. Charges of indecent assault and breach of the peace were later dropped.

The jury cleared the police of wrongfully arresting him. They also accepted that the police believed a breach of the peace might occur on the second occasion, but they made the award after finding he should not have been detained for 40 hours before

the waiting list fund. "If they don't achieve the targets they cannot expect to keep the money," he said.

Earlier the College of Health announced that the government had agreed to fund a £78,000 study to set up a computerised waiting list clearing house. The college would provide a database of waiting lists in every district, to which GPs, district health authorities and community health councils would have access.

Marianne Rigge, the college's director, said that although the database would be restricted initially to the information supplied by the health department, this would be supplemented, where possible, with details about individual hospitals. "We will be able to say to GPs that within your region there are three hospitals where the waiting lists are shorter than the ones you use, and these are their telephone numbers."

Mr Malone-Lee said he supported any move to provide information about hospital lists and suggested this could be extended to details about consultants' lists. Three regions, Mersey, Northern and Wessex, already collect information about the length of list of each consultant in each specialty.

Miss Rigge gave a number of case histories concerning patients who should and could have been treated earlier if they had had access to waiting list information. In one case an elderly woman who had waited for two years for a hip replacement was told by her GP that it might take another two years for an operation, because the hospital had a points system and she only had 11 of the 15 points she needed for an operation.

Woman 'a human rope' in tug-of-war

A WOMAN became the "human rope" in a tug-of-war between two policemen who were trying to pull her out of a former ambulance in opposite directions, Lord Cardigan told a court yesterday.

The incident happened when police stopped a convoy of vehicles going to Stonehenge for a summer solstice festival in 1985 and started making arrests. Lord Cardigan said in evidence at the High Court in Winchester, where 26 people are suing the chief constable of Wiltshire for assault, false imprisonment and damage to property.

One officer, who had smashed a side window in the former ambulance, reached in and grabbed one of two screaming women by the hair "and was hauling very hard", trying to pull her through the broken window, Lord Cardigan, heir to the Marquess of Ailesbury, said.

"There was a most unfortunate tug-of-war," he said. Another officer, who had got in the back of the vehicle, had hold of the same person and "the officer on the outside, pulling her hair, was unaware of that". The girl had been pulled back and forth by her hair until the officer outside had realised what was happening and released his grip.

Lord Cardigan, who accompanied the convoy on his

motor-cycle, after it stopped on land near his home at Savernake Forest, Wiltshire, said that it had been halted on the A303 in Wiltshire by two police vans. It had been clear that police had decided "this far and no further". There had been a heated exchange between some members of the convoy and police.

Then a vehicle had come from the back of the convoy and driven through the hedge-row into a field. It had been followed by several other vehicles. Police manning the roadblock had been replaced by officers with helmets and drawn truncheons. They had gone down the line of vehicles banging on the sides and telling occupants to remove ignition keys and get out.

In some cases, there had been a delay between the police giving the instruction and taking action if the occupants did not respond. "In some other instances, owners were not given any time to respond and very unpleasant sanctions were taken," Lord Cardigan said.

Vehicles' windows had been smashed, sometimes simultaneously with the instruction to leave the vehicle. "That seemed unreasonable to me because they were not given the chance to comply," Lord Cardigan said. The hearing continues today.

holiday caravan. The court heard a church report describing Mr Leigh-Williams as intransigent and criticising his views on the "evil" of Father Christmas and the sanctity of the Sabbath, including the conviction that Sunday marathon runners would go to Hell.

The Bishop denied that the priest's arrest had led to the revocation of his licence.

Mr Leigh-Williams first met the 13-year-old boy in December 1983. The boy said he was not happy at home. The vicar called in the NSPCC and social services to deal with the situation.

In October 1985 Mr Leigh-Williams gave the boy lunch and took him swimming. The following day Mr Leigh-Williams was arrested for gross indecency. The charge was dropped when the boy admitted lying, but not before Mr Leigh-Williams had been held for four-and-a-half days and released on bail.

Later that year Mr Leigh-Williams claims he was lying in a field in Crays Hill, Essex, when he was arrested and detained for 40 hours before being charged with a breach of the peace. This charge was also dropped.



Leigh-Williams: giving donation from damages



Playing away: children kicking a football in the terraced streets of Arkwright Town after being told that they are soon likely to be on the move

Pit villagers bemused by plan to transplant community

By CRAIG SETON

A NOVEL solution was unveiled yesterday for the villagers of Arkwright Town, whose terraced homes have been blighted by leaking methane gas from the colliery that once gave them their livelihood.

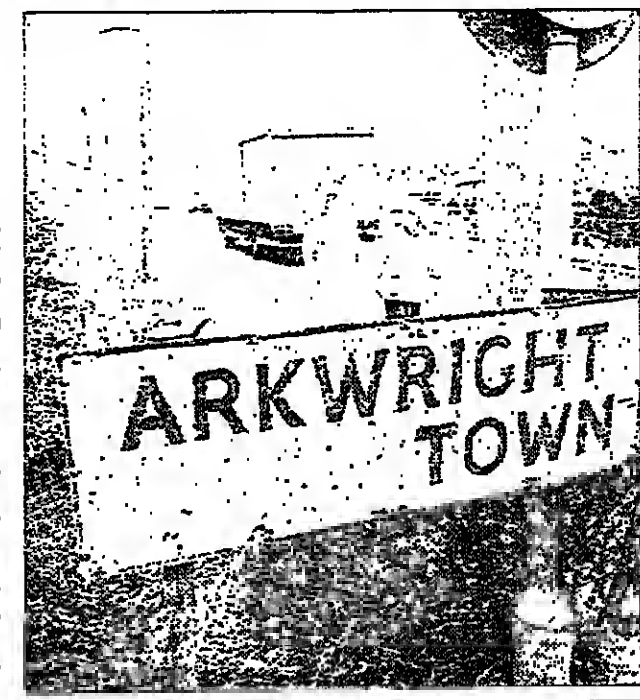
They are being asked to agree to their community being bulldozed and rebuilt a quarter of a mile away, complete with public house, school and fish and chip shop. The £15 million scheme to relocate the north Derbyshire pit village has been proposed by British Coal, which in return wants permission to develop a large open cast coal mine in the area around the former Arkwright colliery. Profits from the mining would pay for the new village.

The 400 villagers gathered in a marquee on the recreation ground to hear the invitation to swap their red-bricked terraces for new semi-detached homes, worth twice as much, in a new village on the other side of the main

Chesterfield Road. They seemed amazed, bemused and slightly suspicious, but generally welcomed the scheme to move away from the problem of methane gas that has dominated their lives.

The plan to build a new Arkwright, 60 years after the community was created, comes after the closure of the village colliery in 1988. Six months later methane gas began seeping dangerously into houses and a third of the 170 homes were evacuated for up to 15 days. Since then methane drainage pumps have controlled the seepage and meters have been installed to monitor levels, but residents sought a permanent solution.

The new village is almost certain to go ahead. More than 90 per cent of villagers are said to welcome it and North East Derbyshire district council, which has hitherto opposed open cast mining, described it as exciting and ingenious.



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Mackay supports tougher divorce laws for children's sake

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

LORD Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, has signalled his support for more rigorous divorce laws to make it harder for couples to separate without considering the needs of their children.

Instead of the present system of "quick and easy" divorce, there should be a more considered process in which couples have time to think about the children and future, he said. At the moment, the parents of 150,000 children a year split up.

In a speech to the annual general meeting of the National Family Conciliation Council in London, Lord

Mackay also criticised divorce as a "knee-jerk reaction to a problem", with no procedure built into the process to promote understanding or agreement. Instead, divorce laws encouraged couples to take up entrenched positions and to prepare to do battle.

His speech comes just weeks before the Law Commission's final proposals on divorce reform.

Lord Mackay made it clear that he favours one of the commission's main proposals, which is that divorce should be a process carried out "over time", rather than the other principal proposal, which is

for a one-year period of separation. Conciliation, in which couples would have the chance to consider the future of the children and make arrangements in a non-hostile atmosphere, would play an important role in such new procedures.

"What we want for the future is a process that does not allow divorce to be easy, but makes it more rigorous by encouraging people to face the consequences and make arrangements for the future before they get divorced," Lord Mackay expressed concern that, under present trends, almost 40 per cent of marriages would end in divorce and one in four children under 16 would be affected by the experience.

He attacked present procedures, which he said might contribute to the difficulty in reaching agreement on the arrangements for children and other matters, and questioned the role of fault, or misbehaviour, in divorce. That encouraged couples to look to the past, instead of to the future.

At present, Lord Mackay said, apportioning blame and giving it a label, such as adultery or unreasonable behaviour might obstruct agreement or reconciliation. A decision by one partner to end a marriage should not plunge the family into war, in which the initiator received a hasty decree terminating the marriage. "Everyone becomes a loser in the subsequent battle."

"We need to find a way which does not make divorce appear the instant, the only solution, only to find that it leaves much heartache and dispute in its wake. What we want for the future is a process that does not allow divorce to be easy, but makes it more rigorous by encouraging people to face the consequences and make arrangements for the future before they get divorced," he said.

"Such a process might also improve the chances of saving a marriage if, by looking at these consequences and considering the future of the children, some people draw back from the decision to divorce." The Lord Chancellor said if a procedure allowed for counselling, conciliation and mediation in an environment free from pressure, it might promote more opportunities for couples to agree, he said. "Agreements are good for children."

Move to restrict use of jail terms

By OUR LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

CROWN court judges will be required to state their reasons for jailing offenders guilty of some of the most serious crimes under a significant change to be made in the forthcoming criminal justice bill.

The change will reduce the number of prison sentences in favour of community-based penalties, even for those who have committed offences as serious as robbery.

Under the bill, expected this autumn, judges and magistrates will be required to comply with new, statutory criteria that will restrict the circumstances in which they can impose jail sentences. They will only be able to jail an offender when it is necessary to protect the public from serious harm.

The original aim, as outlined in the Home Office white paper *Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public*, was that these criteria should apply to offences triable by magistrates only, and to those triable either by magistrates or the crown court. The most serious offences, which are triable only by indictment in the crown court, such as murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and certain cases of burglary were specifically excluded.

It is now understood that after representations from bodies such as the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO), officials have agreed to extend the criteria to a range of indictable-only offences, such as robbery. The criteria will apply where the offender is under 21, which was already intended, and also where the offender is an adult who has not previously served a prison sentence.

Paul Cavatino, an official with NACRO, welcomed the decision yesterday but said that the case for applying the new criteria to all custodial sentences remained strong.

At present only about one in four offenders in England and Wales convicted of indictable-only offences receives a non-custodial sentence. In 1988, the total was 2,752 out of a total sentenced of 10,464.

Under the change now agreed, the figure could rise substantially.

Information packs are to be issued to every prisoner on entering jail to help to reduce the sometimes dangerous anxieties that can afflict inmates (Quentin Cowdry writes).

From next summer, briefing packs containing information ranging from prisoners' rights and privileges to visiting hours will be handed to every new inmate.

The Home Office already produces prisoner information booklets, but these are poorly circulated and do not enjoy much credibility with prisoners. Officials hope that the new packs, written jointly by the Home Office and the Prison Reform Trust, will be more successful.



For his eyes only: Sir James Goldsmith's home on his estate in Jalisco, Mexico, said to resemble a lair of a typical James Bond movie villain

Goldsmith funds anti-nuclear campaign

By JAMIE DETTMER and PETER VICTOR

SIR James Goldsmith, the multi-millionaire entrepreneur who yesterday stunned the City by announcing that he was giving up his business career to concentrate on environmental issues, has agreed to fund a nationwide campaign against the nuclear industry in Britain.

The thrust of the campaign, which will be run by the *Ecologist* magazine and pressure group, is to persuade politicians and the public that nuclear power is not an acceptable way of overcoming the greenhouse effect. Sir James, aged 57, has already given the magazine, which he

helped set up in 1969, £50,000 towards the initial costs of the campaign. According to Edward Goldsmith, his brother and a co-editor of the *Ecologist*, Sir James is also concerned about the use of chemical pesticides in farming and the destruction of the rain forests. "He is not going to waste his time on the small issues," he said.

Sir James's decision to call a halt to his career as a hucaneering corporate raider only a year after he was at the forefront of a £13.5 billion takeover bid for BAT, the tobacco, retail and insurance group, surprised many business associates, who have

questioned whether he will stay away from the boardroom battles he has revelled in for 30 years. Those closer to him, however, say his commitment to ecology is genuine and that his decision to switch wholeheartedly to green issues merely confirms a long standing passion. Tim Bell, a press relations expert and friend of Sir James, said: "It is not a new decision really. He has been moving that way for a long time."

A confidant of the entrepreneur said that Sir James had virtually withdrawn from active business management

shortly before the October 1987 stock market crash. Sir James sold several businesses and a substantial amount of shares a few weeks before Black Monday, and only returned to the world of finance to take part last year in the takeover bid for BAT. "He was tempted into the BAT bid by Jacob Rothschild, who persuaded him that it would be an historic deal if it came off. It was an aberration for Sir James who has now a deep vein of pessimism about the financial world."

Adam Faith, the entrepreneur and former singer and actor, who has been campaigning to save the black rhino in Tanzania, welcomed Mr Goldsmith's commitment to the environment. "If he brings to environmental work the kind of energy, dynamism and ability that he brought to his business dealings, then he could make a difference. His money will be less important than Sir James Goldsmith himself. The fact that a man of his calibre is working on green issues will make a tremendous impact."

Sir James has contributed to environmental causes for many years. The running of his 16,000-acre Mexican estate on the Gulf of California has also been marked by his interest in ecology. Rare and endangered animals have been collected there and the land is farmed organically. Few outsiders have managed to penetrate the estate, said to resemble the lair of a typical James Bond millionaire-villain, with electronic and human security arrangements.

Don't all rush, page 14

Patients died after drink of dish fluid

A health authority was yesterday fined £1,000 for breaching safety laws when two patients died after being given dish-washing fluid to drink.

Joseph Firth, aged 81, and Leslie Wharmby, aged 74, patients at the High Royds mental hospital, Menston, near Leeds, suffered terrible burns to the mouth and throat after a nurse mistook a jug of dish-washing fluid for lemon juice. Magistrates were told the cleaner using the fluid had received no training about it. Leeds Western Health Authority admitted inadequate training and was found guilty of failing promptly to tell the Health and Safety Executive of the accident.

Arson charge is dropped

A woman accused of arson at her former boy friend's home has had the charge dropped. It was announced yesterday. Jane Salvesson, aged 36, of West Kensington, London, had been charged after a fire at the Fulham home of Michael Stevens. The Crown Prosecution Service said that there was insufficient evidence.

Last year, Miss Salvesson had a murder charge withdrawn after Mr Stevens's fiancée, Diana Maw, was shot in the head with a crossbow bolt.

Busman's award

Derek Maynard, of Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, who has had a phobia of buses since receiving serious back injuries in 1986 when a bus he was cleaning at a depot was hit by another was yesterday awarded damages of £89,959 against London Buses.

Abduction case

Steven Burns, aged 20, a waiter in Newquay, Devon, was yesterday charged with abducting Matthew Davy, aged six, in the town. Matthew, from Newquay, disappeared more than two weeks ago, and was found by chance on Tuesday by a relative in Kent.

Unlucky trip

A rare grey-checked thrush survived a freak flight across the Atlantic only to die at the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust's bird sanctuary at Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, when it flew into a glass door.

Flood bleeper

A bleeper service has begun for Wye Valley farmers after complaints of insufficient warning of floods. The National Rivers Authority will bleep farmers if they should move stock to higher ground.

Deaf-blind people given fresh hope

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE without sight and hearing might soon be able to converse with friends hundreds of miles away, read a daily newspaper, keep in touch with events on television and retire in the evening with a Booker prize bestseller.

British electronics engineers yesterday unveiled a remarkable telecommunications system for deaf and blind people which allows communication with the outside world. Experts believe that the system, called Hand-Tapper, could

make such people more independent and improve their quality of life.

The prototype, which researchers say could be a commercial reality in a year, given suitable funding, has been developed by a team at University College London in conjunction with deaf-blind people and the National Deaf-Blind League, a charity.

More than 11,000 Britons are crippled by the dual handicap of deafness and blindness. An estimated 90 per cent cannot master braille.

The primary method of communication for such people is finger-spelling, based on the British manual finger-spelling alphabet, in which parts of the hand and the way in which these areas are touched or stroked relates to a specific letter.

Hand-Tapper harnesses the alphabet to allow a person unskilled in finger-spelling to communicate with a deaf-blind person via a telephone. At the heart of the system is a hand shaped pad carrying vibrating pins corresponding to the alphabet and a modem linked to the telephone.

Someone dialling Hand-Tapper types the conversation on to a keyboard, or dictates the conversation to one of British Telecom's special operators, who then relays the text down the telephone.

The communication causes the pins to pop up and vibrate singly or in sequence depending on the letter and using his or her own keyboard the handicapped person can respond. Field trials will start soon and the charity is to launch a fund-raising appeal.

'Cynical' cigarette sales attacked

By THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

SHOPKEEPERS who sell single cigarettes to children are acting as cynical drug pushers, researchers said yesterday.

A survey of 3,513 teenagers at nine schools in Bristol found that most of those who smoked had bought single cigarettes. The more a teenager smoked, the more likely he or she was to have bought cigarettes one at a time.

Martin Jarvis, of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's health behaviour unit, said that children under 16 were spending a total of £70 million a year on cigarettes, although it was against the law to sell to them.

"Our results imply a cynical flouting of the law by many shopkeepers who are acting straightforwardly as drug pushers," he said. "Nicotine is a very powerful addictive drug and other studies have shown that people abusing heroin, cocaine and alcohol have found cigarettes hardest to give up."

Mr Jarvis carried out the survey with Ann McNeill, formerly of the Institute of Psychiatry's addiction research unit, and now with the Health Education Authority.

Dr McNeill said: "About 110,000 people a year in Britain die from smoking-related diseases and the tobacco industry needs to recruit 300 new smokers a day to replace them. About 24 per cent of boys aged 15 and about 31 per cent of girls of the same age are known to smoke, and there is good evidence that they quickly become hooked."

"Given the intractability of the smoking habit, anything which makes cigarettes more

available to those with little money to spend can only encourage recruitment of another generation of cigarette addicts."

The results of the survey are published in this month's issue of the *British Journal of Addiction* and were presented at a new conference held by the British Medical Association in London. The association said that in 1988 only 29 shopkeepers were prosecuted for selling cigarettes to children under 16, and 26 of those were convicted.

According to a government-funded study in the same year, only 8 per cent of children were refused cigarettes when they tried to buy them.

The Parents Against Tobacco organisation, which is supported by the association and by the Health Education Authority, said it would try to find a sponsor for a private member's bill which would seek tougher penalties for shopkeepers who made illegal sales.

A steep rise in claims for alleged malpractice involving accidents at birth in maternity wards could lead to cutbacks in hospital services, solicitors said yesterday.

The number of such claims has more than doubled in the last year to almost 40, according to a study by Capsticks, a law firm specialising in the health service.

Brian Capstick, co-author of the study, said at a conference in London yesterday that there was no evidence of declining medical standards. The main cause for the increase was a change in legal aid rules in April last year.

Lack of support upset bishop

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS REPORTER

THE Bishop of Durham described yesterday his anger at the churchmen and theologians who failed to stand by him when his controversial views on central Christian beliefs led to calls for his dismissal and resignation.

The Rt Rev David Jenkins said that the controversy that surrounded his views on the virgin birth and the resurrection had been extremely stressful. "What really made me angry was that lots of people in the Church who must have known that what I was saying was accepted teaching in theological colleges simply did not enter into the controversy or give me support. There was a sense of feeling let down."

The bishop, a former professor of theology at Leeds University, was speaking at the launch of *Lying Down in Church*, a book about one church's approach to relaxation and meditation. The author, the Rev Geoffrey Harding, retired vicar of St Mary Woolnoth in the city, is a lifelong friend of the bishop.

Dr Jenkins said: "It was not until I came to terms with how angry I was that I was able to deal with the stress. This

notion that we are heroes and can cope with anything without it doing us any harm is a very dangerous one."

Dr Jenkins, aged 65, caused a furor when he said on a television religious programme that Christ's resurrection had been spiritual rather than physical. He said that he had been angry that his statement of what had been obvious for years had caused such a fuss and such frequent misrepresentation.

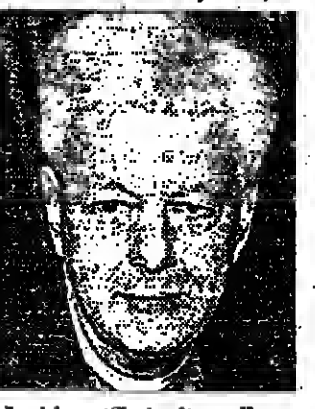
Referring to demands that he should withdraw as bishop-elect before his consecration at York Minster in July 1984, he

said: "There would be no question of my consecration being stopped because anyone who knew anything about theology, who actually investigated it, couldn't possibly find any reason for not consecrating me. I gather now that lots of people thought it could be stopped or would be stopped but that never entered my head."

Dr Jenkins added: "I got hundreds and it later grew into thousands of letters. The majority supporting me. The important point is that the discussion has got going. I don't really have any regrets now."

His personal relaxation technique involves withdrawing into himself and being still, "even in a space in a service". Dr Jenkins said. "Of course it is a stressful job being a bishop, but stress is a handled property is surely part of it. It keeps you on your toes. Being relaxed is not being a puddling. It's withdrawing into yourself in order to get out there again."

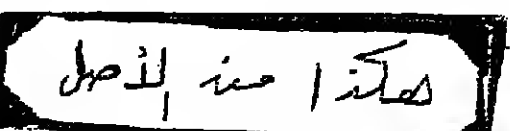
Lying Down in Church, Churchman Publishing (117 Broomfield Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, £4.95)



Jenkins: "I don't really have any regrets now"

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Instant help 'might have saved two Lockerbie victims'

TWO passengers from Pan Am 103 might have survived the 31,000ft fall to the ground after a terrorist bomb exploded on the aircraft over Lockerbie, an enquiry was told yesterday.

Anthony Busuttil, professor of forensic medicine at Edinburgh University, told the hearing in Dumfries that they might have survived had they received immediate medical treatment. He said that the passengers would have hit the ground at about 120mph after falling for some two-and-a-half minutes.

Professor Busuttil said that a team of eight pathologists grouped the 259 victims from the aircraft into three categories: those with gross injuries who would have been killed outright; those less severely injured but still suffering extensive damage to vital organs, who might have been killed outright or who died soon after losing consciousness; and the two passengers with less severe injuries.

"It is possible that this

group may have survived for a short time," he said. The professor also told the enquiry that the 11 Lockerbie residents killed would have died instantly when the aircraft's fuel-laden wing section crashed on the Sherwood area of the town, creating a fireball. The three-man crew on the flight deck would have been killed outright, as would 11 of the 13 cabin crew.

There was no evidence that the bomb, in a baggage container on the New York-bound Boeing 747, created a fire in the aircraft.

Professor Busuttil condemned as disgraceful an article by William Eckert, an American pathologist, in the *American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*, and said it had wrongly claimed that the body of a victim was found clutching a child. The article also contained factual inaccuracies, including the wrong date for the crash and an incorrect casualty toll. He said that Dr Eckert was editor of the journal.

The professor, the first

pathologist to give evidence at the enquiry, said that the eight pathologists were called to Lockerbie after the disaster, working at first in a makeshift mortuary in the town hall. The mortuary was later moved to the town's ice rink.

The bodies of seven of the 11 Lockerbie people who died were never found, he said. The explosion caused by the crash would have destroyed their bodies. Those which had been found showed severe burns and multiple injuries from debris falling on or near them. The enquiry was told earlier that the names of the two passengers who might have survived "for a short time" were being withheld in line with relatives' wishes.

Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, the Lord Advocate, asked the professor: "Let us take an extreme example: if, by the greatest of good fortune, one of those within group three had been immediately attended upon by the best-qualified medical team imaginable, would long-term survival have been possible?"

The professor replied:

"There is a possibility that, if resuscitation was available immediately, with access to hospital facilities, there could have been survival." The Lord Advocate asked: "For those two?" Professor Busuttil replied: "For those two."

The enquiry was told last week that a Lockerbie woman was convinced that she had felt a pulse on the body of a woman found near the cockpit section at Tundergarth. Other witnesses said that woman may have been Noelle Berti, aged 40, from Paris, a stewardess. Professor Busuttil told the enquiry, however, that she had suffered injuries "totally incompatible" with surviving.

He said 201 of the plane's 243 passengers would have been killed outright without question. Nineteen could have died outright or soon after falling unconscious. The two less severely injured could have survived "for a short time" — but this was no more than a possibility.

Professor Busuttil told the hearing that victims in free fall from a disintegration at that height would have hit the ground at a speed of 120mph. Ground injuries would have masked any suffering in the aircraft, but no passenger showed evidence of burns or smoke inhalation.

"Some victims may have fallen faster because they were attached to heavy parts of the aircraft. Some may have fallen more slowly because they were with parts of the aircraft which fluttered down," he said.

Some passengers might have regained consciousness as they fell into lower altitudes with more oxygen, remaining conscious in free fall all the way to the ground. It was not possible, however, to say which individuals were conscious.

Boom in bicycles puts new pressure on safety

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

IN THE decade since Norman Tebbit advised the unemployed to get on their bikes the ozone-friendly bicycle has assumed unimagined importance as a means of transport.

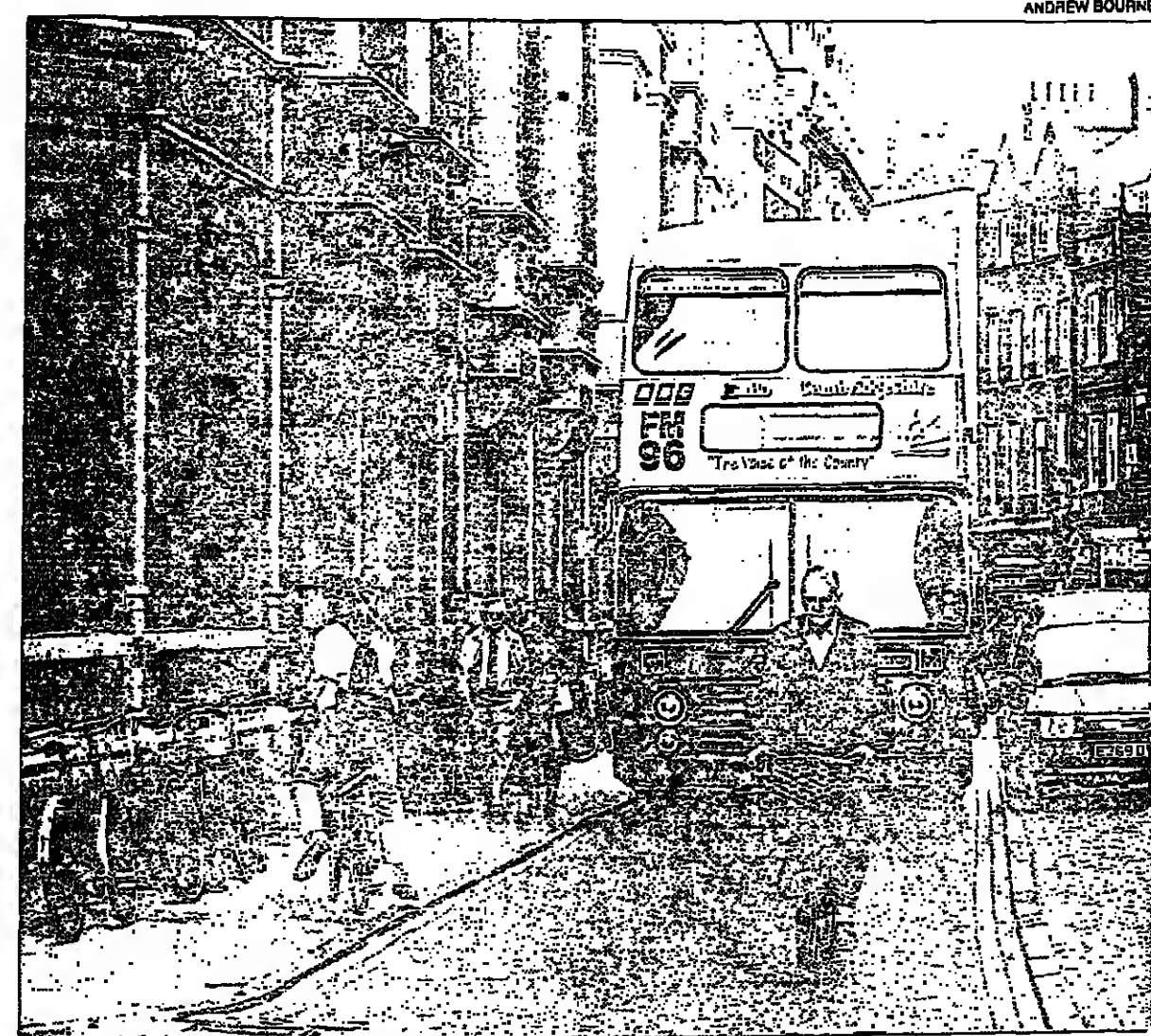
Sales have almost doubled from 1.5 million to 2.8 million a year and there are now an estimated 13 million bicycle owners in Britain, more than three-and-a-half million of whom regularly use pedal power to get to work.

The boom in cycling has inevitably meant a higher casualty toll on the roads, now rising by 10 per cent a year. In 1989, 20,716 adults and 7,797 children were injured, of whom 232 adults and 62 children died. The result is a growing clamour for bicycle lanes and other safety improvements, greater awareness by motorists of the cyclist and a co-ordinated government transport policy.

The Department of Transport announced yesterday that a road safety initiative for children will be launched in the spring, by which time the London Cycling Campaign also hopes that a 1,000-mile network of bicycle routes in the capital will have been agreed by the London boroughs.

A nationwide survey of cyclists published today by Gallup shows that 58 per cent of cyclists feel local authorities are not doing enough to provide safe routes and they want the plans for London copied by other cities. Nearly three out of ten cyclists have been involved in some kind of accident.

The survey, for the bicycle



Uneasy rider: this cyclist battling with rush-hour traffic in Cambridge could soon be forced off the city's streets as the local authority tonight discusses banning cycles from a section of the centre between 10am and 4pm. Students have protested at the move, which the council says is also being made to tackle an increase in accidents.

and accessories retailer Halfords, also shows that although 93 per cent want an integrated transport policy similar to that on the Continent, 37 per cent would be willing to pay a bicycle tax to fund more facilities on the road such as new routes.

Len Unwin, general secretary of the British Cycling Federation, said: "It's an increasingly popular mode of transport. Just look in any town and you will find more and more people using bikes to commute to work. It's environmentally desirable but also the most economic form of transport. The major problem we face, though, is that when road schemes

are being considered no thought is given to the cyclist. There are clearly not enough cycle routes through towns but things are beginning to improve and there is now support for us from the Department of Transport."

Indications of growing pedal power during the nineties are emerging regularly as a counter to the increasing costs of energy and congestion.

Workers at the Body Shop store chain have set a trend by introducing company bicycles as a perk, the local authorities of Camden and Haringey, north London, operate "bike pools" for staff to use on council

business, and Sutton council, south London, pays the same mileage rate to cyclists on council business as motorists.

Halfords is working with British Rail to provide increased bicycle parking facilities and a number of pilot stations throughout the Network SouthEast catchment area have been chosen to encourage commuters to cycle rather than drive to their local stations.

Mintel, the market research company, forecasts that bike sales will increase by two-thirds in the next five years as local authorities make greater provision for cyclists. Britain, never-

theless, still has a long way to catch up with its European neighbours, especially The Netherlands where up to 40 per cent of people commute by bicycle.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents renewed a call yesterday for cyclists to wear reflective clothing and for motorists to be more bike-conscious.

A spokesman for the transport department said: "Judging by the buoyancy in cycle sales, cycling is getting more and more popular but it is one of the least safe modes of transport. We aim to make it safer. There will be a big campaign in the spring."

Student fees to be arrested over poll tax debts

By KERRY GILL

SHERIFF officers have been ordered to arrest university and college tuition fees for up to 1,000 Scottish students who have refused to pay the community charge.

The action could be repeated throughout Britain in an effort to recoup poll tax debts incurred by tens of thousands of students. The government, which pays tuition fees to universities, is, however, likely to challenge the move in court in spite of urging local authorities to recover poll tax debts by all legal means.

An estimated 20,000 Scottish students have received final notices or summary warrants for non-payment. The implications for England and Wales, halfway through the first year of the tax, are enormous.

Strathclyde regional council, the biggest local authority in Scotland, has taken action against about 1,000 students, according to Ian Henley, its deputy director of finance. More stoppages are expected over coming months.

The council is owed more than £50 million in poll tax from last year, and Mr Henley said that the authority was legally obliged to try to recover that money. Collection by warrant sales was not favoured and students were unlikely to have any earnings.

"If they do not offer us details of their bank accounts, then we have no choice but to seek to recover the money from other sources of income, such as bursaries. Students have been fairly prominent among non-payers and we have to look at what action we can take against them."

Tuition fees are paid by the Scottish education department to colleges and universities. A spokesman for the Scottish Office said: "The secretary of state has been served with an arrestment order for community charge in respect of certain students at Scottish institutions. The Scottish education department has written to the bodies concerned pointing out that the tuition fee payment for 1990-91 will require to be adjusted if the arrestments are found to be valid."

He said, however, that the question of validity was not clear and had yet to be tested. "There has to be a court judgment on this and we will challenge the arrestment."

A spokeswoman for Strathclyde university said that, so far, it had been told that a total of £2,800 in respect of 33 of its 8,500 students could be deducted from fee income in January. "We were astonished by this and will be taking legal advice on the matter. We feel that we have been put in an

invidious position by being forced to act as poll tax collectors." Glasgow university has been told that it stands to have £2,200 arrested on behalf of 26 students who have failed to pay the poll tax.

Donna McKinnon, Scottish secretary of the National Union of Students, said that she did not believe the arrestment order was legal.

"We are extremely concerned about the long-term implications about what they have done. It could open the floodgates to creditors to take similar action against students. It is a very dangerous precedent," she said.

Professor John Forty, principal of Stirling university, said: "We will need to challenge the regularity of this procedure. If fees are now going to be made vulnerable by this kind of move, then it means our financial position is going to be completely undermined."

Kirkcaldy council, West Yorkshire, is today launching its biggest drive against local people refusing to pay their poll tax.

More than 12,000 people are being summonsed by the council at Huddersfield magistrates' court for non-payment of the community charge. Anti-poll tax groups are expected to demonstrate outside the court.

Brilliant and chaotic play leaves third game drawn

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

THE adjourned third game of the World Chess Championship in New York ended in a draw on the 53rd move after some brilliant play on both sides.

The first session of game 3, with Karpov playing white and Kasparov black, had witnessed some of the most chaotic, wild and unconventional battles ever seen at this level of chess. In the opening, a King's Indian Defence, Kasparov played what was previously regarded as a book

blunder on move 9, which allowed Karpov to win rook for bishop, normally a decisive advantage. Kasparov, however, succeeded in generating counterplay, and by the speed of his moves it was evident that he had prepared this idea in pre-match analysis. Then on the 17th move, the world champion offered a fresh sacrifice, one which electrified spectators and commentators alike.

Kasparov gave up his queen for just bishop, knight and pawn, an astounding concept that will fuel debate among chess theoreticians for years to come.

With his huge material advantage Karpov should, by the book, have won easily, but the former champion seemed unable to form a coherent plan and eventually in a desperate attempt to free his position he gave back the queen on the 25th move.

In the second session, on move 48, and with his back against the wall, Karpov made

a brilliant defensive decision, sacrificing a knight to eliminate the black passed pawn. On the 53rd move when the draw was agreed Kasparov would still have the advantage of bishop and knight against knight and pawn, but this is a material edge insufficient to force victory.

White Black
1 d4 Nf6 28 Nd4 Bc3
2 e4 g5 29 Ne2 N4
3 Nc3 g7 30 Nf1 N5
4 e4 d5 31 N3 N5
5 Nf3 0-0 32 g3 g5
6 Nc2 Bb7 33 Nf1 N4
7 Bc3 Qc7 34 Qf1 N5
8 dxc5 dxc5 35 Ke2 N5
9 Nf5 Qd8 36 cxd5 N5
10 Bc2 Bc6 37 Bc4 N7
11 Bc7 Qd7 38 Rd5 B6
12 Bc8 Kc8 39 Rd5 Nc3
13 Qc2 Nc5 40 Qf1 N5
14 Nf1 N5 41 Nf1 N5
15 0-0 N6 42 Nf3 N5
16 Nf5 N5 43 Nf3 N5
17 Rd7 Bc7 44 Nf3 N5
18 Qc2 Bc8 45 Nf3 N5
19 N3 e4 46 Nf3 N5
20 Nf1 N5 47 Nf3 N5
21 Bf1 N5 48 Nf3 N5
22 Nc2 N5 49 Nf3 N5
23 Qc5 N7 50 Nf3 N5
24 Nd4 c5 51 Nf3 N5
25 Qxc5 Kc6 52 Nf3 N5
26 Nxc2 N7 53 Rd5 N5
27 Bc7 N6 Draw agreed

Final position in the drawn third game

boarded instinct of both types seems to be more haphazard than books suggest. "A squirrel may bury surplus food, but will quickly forget the location. If the creature finds a cache it is most likely to be by accident or a store belonging to some other squirrel," he said.

Both varieties are enthusiastic second-home owners. Mr Skelcher, noting radio signals, has counted 26 drays, or nests, used regularly by only four squirrels.

The study follows research by London Zoo into ways of reintroducing red squirrels threatened by the grey type. Zoologists devised a food hopper and a drey that could be triggered only by the lighter red squirrel. Well-fed the red squirrels may have become, but West End cats and passing traffic proved to be perils from which the zoo could not save them.

Nature group tunes in to squirrels

By RONALD FAUX

IN THE wake of Oliver Cromwell comes *Sciurus carolinensis*. The Lord Protector was perhaps the last aggressor to arrive in the North-West and knock the local population about a bit. The grey squirrel is following his example, causing havoc among the resident red squirrels, or *Sciurus vulgaris*, which the Lancashire Trust for Nature Conservation has been prompted to investigate.

In 100 acres of woodland at Warton Crag, near Carnforth, Lancashire, Graeme Skelcher runs the trust's squirrel project, trapping red and grey varieties, fitting them with radio transmitters, and then plotting their movements. "There has been an invasion of greys, a bit from Cromwellian, I suppose you could say, and the forecast is that within 15 years of

the greys getting in, the reds could disappear altogether," he said.

Mr Skelcher, a mathematics graduate, patrols the wood with a radio receiver that tracks the position of each rodent. Six red and three grey squirrels are presently sending out signals. Since the transmitters cost £70 each and red squirrels, in particular, are apt to be cavalier in their wanderings and go off-air without trace, equipping the project is expensive. The radio collars transmit across a one-mile radius for nine months before the signal fades.

The study has so far found little pattern in a squirrel's life. The grey variety is indeed more successful at taking over territory and can survive on a wider variety of food in more crowded circumstances but, Mr Skelcher says, the aut-

boarded instinct of both types seems to be more haphazard than books suggest. "A squirrel may bury surplus food, but will quickly forget the location. If the creature finds a cache it is most likely to be by accident or a store belonging to some other squirrel," he said.

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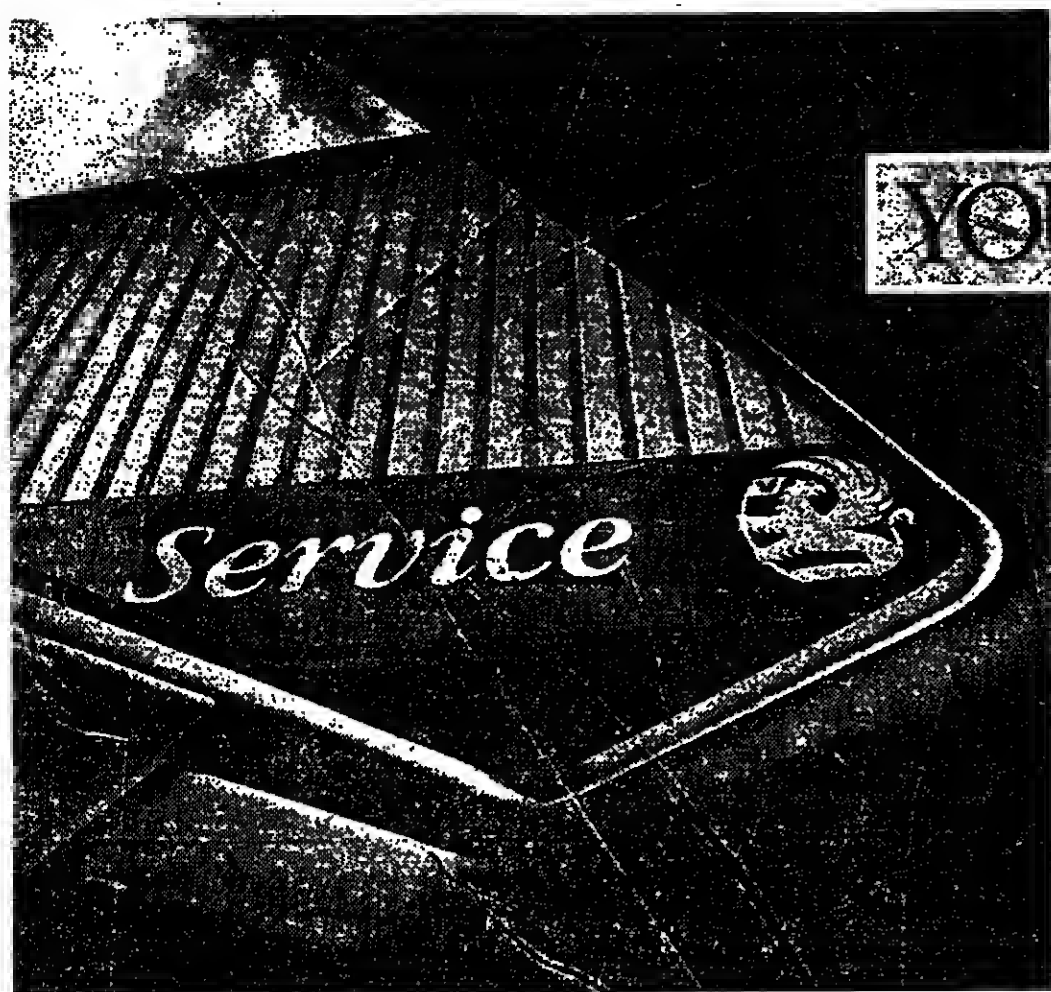
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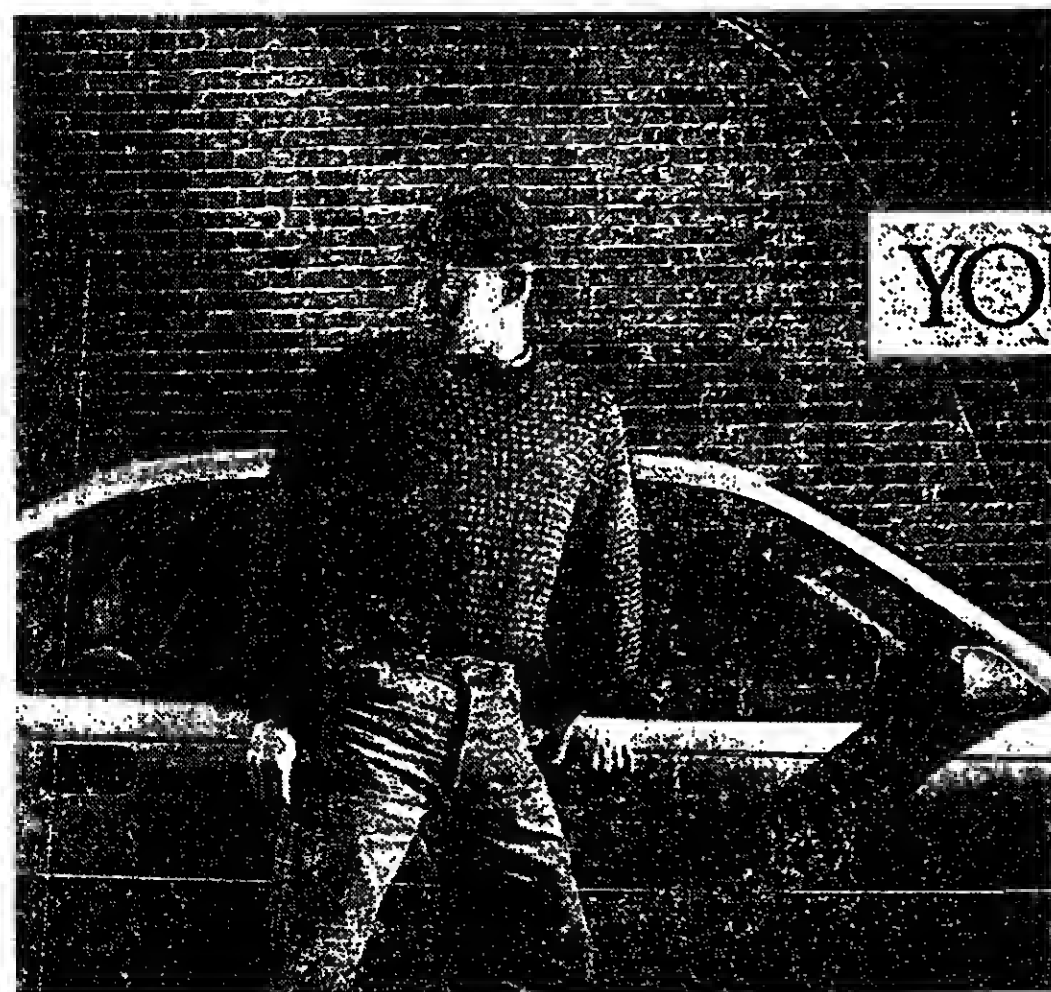
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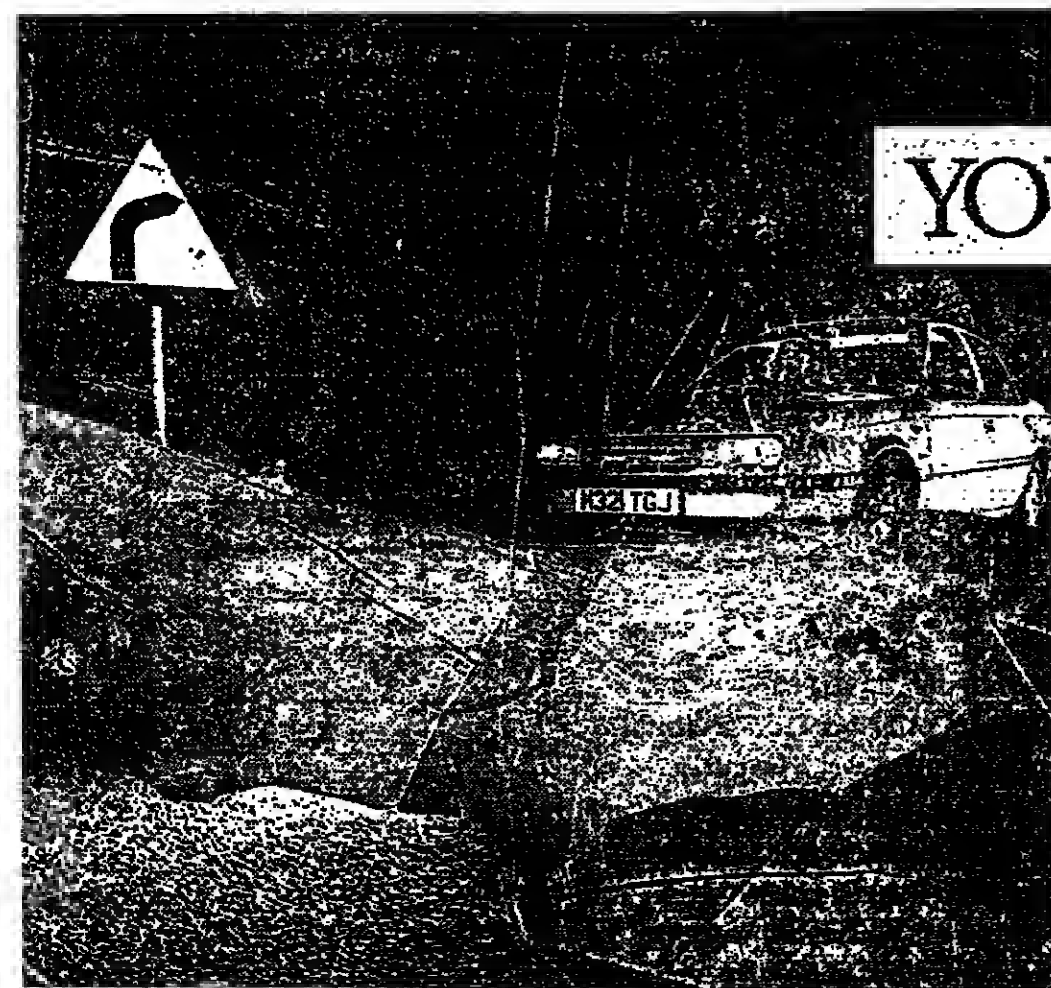
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ERM ENTRY

'Price to pay' for cabinet bungling

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL REPORTER

BRITAIN will have to pay a painful price for the government's bungling of the economy over the past year, Paddy Ashdown predicted yesterday when demanding a five-point economic strategy in the wake of Britain's entry into the exchange-rate mechanism.

The Liberal Democrat leader dismissed as futile debates on Britain's entry and instead questioned the government's ability to be tough enough to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by ERM membership.

Divisions in the cabinet on economic and monetary union will damage economic performance and undermine confidence in sterling, as did the split between Margaret Thatcher and Nigel Lawson, he said.

"They sit like a timebomb at the heart of the government machine. The fuse has been lit. John Major (Chancellor) must now back up his anti-inflationary rhetoric with action."

At a Westminster press conference Mr Ashdown added: "Now that we are in the ERM, there can be no hiding place for the economy. The chancellor's policies must be based on an explicit recognition of that fact. The country and the markets need to know what will be the policy now we are in the exchange rate mechanism."

The Liberal Democrats strategy is:

- a commitment to the goal of a single European currency;
- tighter fiscal policy;
- targeted increases in public spending for education, training and transport;
- a commitment to move to the narrow bands of ERM next year;
- the Bank of England to be given responsibility for monetary policy independent of the government.

Mr Ashdown said that the government had failed to prepare Britain for the changed economic conditions of ERM membership.

"If the prime minister will not provide this leadership because of her anti-European prejudices, her chancellor must repeat his victory over ERM membership by ensuring that Britain plays a positive rather than a negative role in shaping economic and monetary union and the single currency."

Mr Ashdown, who said at his party conference that a Liberal Democrat government would be willing to raise income tax, added yesterday that John Major must stop all the government's talk of tax cuts.



Paddy Ashdown

BY-ELECTION

Ashdown looks to Eastbourne test

PADDY Ashdown will treat the Liberal Democrat vote in today's Eastbourne by-election as a test of the party's revived status as the credible alternative in Conservative-held constituencies at the next general election (Sheila Gunn writes).

Richard Hickmet, the Tory candidate, is confident of holding the seat left vacant by the murder of Ian Gow, but the Liberal Democrat leader said that the outcome was "too close to call".

Mr Ashdown told a press conference in London yesterday: "I expect not only a good result but [that] Labour will be unlikely to improve on its general election performance and may even get less."

The steady and determined build-up in the Liberal Democrats' fortunes in the past 18 months had pushed them past the point of being satisfied merely with a high profile campaign. "I hope it will convince certain commentators that the electorate is not to be judged by sitting in an armchair in London reading opinion polls. It will confirm the argument I have been making that where the party is challenged by the Tories we are the people who can beat the Tories."

Local issues and law and order have dominated the campaign, with Mr Hickmet, a

Ravenscraig pledge fails to satisfy the House

By JOHN WINDER, PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

BRITISH Steel's undertaking not to dismantle any of the Ravenscraig hot strip mill in Scotland before April 5 next year received only a muted welcome when it was announced in the Commons yesterday.

The undertaking by Sir Robert Scholey, chairman of British Steel, will give some time for consideration of a survey of the Scottish steel industry the final conclusions of which will be available in the new year. The report is being prepared for the Scottish Development Agency by independent consultants, Arthur D. Little.

Malcolm Rifkind, Scottish secretary, who has made clear his own disagreement with the British Steel decision to close the Ravenscraig hot strip mill, told MPs that he hoped the undertaking would give time for a full assessment of the study.

Mr Rifkind said that Sir Robert had indicated that British Steel had promised full co-operation in the preparation of the development agency survey of the prospects for the steel industry in Scotland. The minister added later that he shared Opposition concern about the future of the Clydesdale tube plant, about which Sir Robert had not been able to tell him of any decisions.

Opposition MPs expressed misgivings about the precise nature of the undertaking on the Ravenscraig plant and Donald Dewar, Labour spokesman on Scotland, insisted that there must be no removal or dismantling of plant before the report was available and could be assessed.

He said that the minister should force British Steel to come clean on the facts behind the closure of the hot strip mill. He should meet the chairman after the report was produced "to go into battle on behalf of the Scottish steel industry".

Tessie Conservative MPs demanded that developments of the profitable plant there should not be sacrificed to preference for Scotland.

George Robertson (Hamilton, Lab) said that there was deep concern among the trade unions about the position and they wanted to know whether yesterday's meeting Mr Rifkind had received answers to the questions from the Ravenscraig shop stewards that he had undertaken to put on their behalf. What confidence could the people of Scotland have in assurances from British Steel?

Mr Rifkind said that he had given Sir Robert Scholey the shop stewards' questions, as he had promised.

"I put to him the utility of answering those questions as much as he felt able to do."

Sir Robert had said that he would meet the chairman of the development agency, Sir David Nickson.

Tim Devlin (Stockton South, C) asked: "Did the secretary of state tell the chairman that the only way the long-term viability of the steel industry in this country can be guaranteed is if decisions on future investment

are made for valid commercial reasons only and not for political reasons?"

"Will he tell the trade unions that the most commercially competitive and productive steel plant in this country is on Teesside and that it would be a tragedy to delay investment there for the political machinations of the Labour party in Scotland?"

Mr Rifkind replied: "There is agreement on all sides that the future of the steel industry has to be decided on commercial grounds."

Malcolm Bruce, Liberal Democrat spokesman on Scotland, said that the meeting between Sir Robert and Mr Rifkind had been a meeting between private citizens because Mr Rifkind had effectively given up trying to influence British Steel decisions.

Was the development agency report likely to be ready in time to change the disastrous decisions on Scottish steel?

Mr Rifkind said that unless Mr Bruce was proposing re-nationalisation, he was exposing the bankruptcy of his first question. They expected preliminary conclusions on the survey before Christmas and final ones early in the new year. It was important that there was to be co-operation between British Steel and the development agency and that the two chairmen were to meet.

Sir Hector Monro (Dumfries, C) asked how they could assess the commercial judgment of British Steel when they did not know the facts on which they had taken the decision.

Mr Rifkind: "It is precisely for that reason that I and others were unable to say whether the conclusion reached by British Steel is justified."



Rifkind: received promise from British Steel chief

Double election battle begins

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ROY Hattersley launches today Labour's campaign to hold the marginal seat of Bradford North in a tough by-election contest next month.

The writs for by-elections in Bradford North and Bootle on Merseyside on November 8 were moved in the Commons by Derek Foster, the Opposition chief whip.

Labour remains ahead in the opinion polls, but anything short of a convincing victory in the Yorkshire seat would damage the party's efforts to portray itself as a government in waiting.

A complicating factor for party strategists is the decision by the Islamic party of Great Britain to field a candidate in a seat where the Muslim vote of about 7,000 has tradition-

ally gone to Labour. David Piddock, of the Islamic party, is unlikely to win, but Labour's fear is that he could deprive them of enough votes to ensure a Conservative victory in the seat which the late Pat Wall held in the 1987 general election with a majority of 1,633.

On the same day as polling in Bradford North, a by-election will take place in the safe Labour seat of Bootle, caused by Mike Carr's death.

Candidates in Bradford North include: Terry Rooney (Lab), Joy Atkin (C), David Ward (Lib Dem), Mike Knott (Grn) and Mr Piddock. In Bootle they include: Joe Benton (Lab), James Clappison (C) and John Cunningham (Lib Dem).

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

West 'swallowing the KGB line'

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WESTERN leaders were criticised last night for giving uncritical support to President Gorbachev despite his failure to put his leadership to a democratic vote throughout the Soviet Union.

Dr David Owen, the former foreign secretary, accused politicians in the West of swallowing KGB propaganda in their dismissal of Boris Yeltsin and of putting too much faith in Mr Gorbachev and his attempt to show that there was a third way between Stalin's communism and Western-style democracy.

The former SDP leader urged the West to be more questioning of Mr Gorbachev and the changes he was attempting to introduce into the Soviet Union. He said that, although the Soviet president deserved the Nobel Peace Prize, "the largely uncritical euphoria that surrounds it in the West is troubling". He

added: "Our political leaders have placed too many bets on Gorbachev; they have swallowed KGB propaganda against Boris Yeltsin and they would be well advised now to hedge their bets."

Mr Owen said the West should judge Mr Gorbachev for what he was, "a remarkable, pragmatic and adaptable leader", who had managed to mastermind the transfer of power from the Communist party to a power élite that he now headed. It was, however, dangerous nonsense to accept that that group believed in genuine democracy or a market economy. Dr Owen said in a lecture at the Cambridge Union.

The policies followed by the Mr Gorbachev had been dictated by his recognition that the Soviet Union must retreat from an "imperial" empire that had resulted in financial difficulties and

a grossly over-extended military apparatus. "We should be particularly careful not to fall for the propaganda that all these changes stem from the goodness of the heart and the general enlightenment of the political leaders."

Dr Owen said Western leaders should not feed the Soviet leadership's delusion that the Soviet Union could give up the satellite countries of Eastern Europe and consolidate around the present boundaries of the USSR.

He added that the West would do Mr Gorbachev no favours if it gave the impression that his third way between old-style communism and a true Western-style democracy had a future. Nor, Dr Owen said, should he be insulated from legitimate pressure from Western democracies to put his leadership to the vote.

NATURE COUNCIL

'Wilder flights of fancy' on funding denied

By PETER MULLIGAN, PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

REPORTS that the cost of reorganising the Nature Conservancy Council into three parts might be £30 million a year were denied by the government last night. In the House of Lords, Lady Blatch, a junior environment minister, told peers that the cost was less than £10 million.

She used a statement before the report stage of the Environmental Protection bill continued to dispel what she called the "wilder flights of fancy" that had appeared in the media and been quoted in Parliament.

She said that exaggerated estimates of £20 million or even £30 million had been made by those who "shall we say, do not wish to see our proposals pre-empted in the best light".

The actual estimate for extra staff and consequential costs such as accommodation was £9.18 million. There would be 294 more staff than at present and the government was allowing for consolidation of temporary posts as well as creating new ones.

She said: "This means that, far from there being a major increase in bureaucracy, there will be extra permanent posts in scientific grades and addi-

tional provision for policy and think-tank work."

The new proposals allowed for 1,350 publicly financed staff - 654 for the conservancy council in England, 225 for the Countryside Council for Wales and 385 for the conservancy council in Scotland. Another 86 would go to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

She added: "The new structure will be soundly based and, when it is operation, it should be able to do more in each country than the existing conservancy council. This is particularly true of Scotland and Wales."

She repeated the a commitment that "adequate resources" would be provided to cover reorganisation without damaging present conservation programmes.

The government, she said, had justified the case for reform: "In a nutshell, it is that separate agencies for each country will be more sensitive and accountable."

Her announcement was interrupted by Opposition peers who protested that they had not had advance warning and the House was adjourned for 25 minutes for behind-the-scenes discussions.

PRISONS

Tory MP predicts more jail riots

By ANDREW PIERCE

A SENIOR Tory backbench MP predicted yesterday that the prison system was facing "another Strangeways jail riot next year and blamed the government."

Sir Charles Irving, MP for Cheltenham, accused the Home Office of failing to heed warnings from prison officers, voluntary agencies and prisoners. He said: "We have had one disturbance after another."

When will the government learn? I predict that we will have another Strangeways on our hands next year."

Sir Charles was speaking at the launch, at the House of Commons, of the annual report of the Stonham Housing Association, a specialist organisation providing homes for 2,900 single homeless people, including many former offenders.

The MP, who is founder and chairman of the association, said: "We cannot seem to get it into the brains of those who are responsible that the frustrations and tensions within the prison system will lead to further terrible strains on the service."

"When will the government learn it must take out of the prisons the people who were put there after conviction for minor and trivial offences. Their continued imprisonment is counter-productive."

"I implore the Home Secretary: wake up to the fact voluntary agencies such as Stonham must have more money. If we did, we could expand our facilities to take some of the people who should not be in prison."

Stonham has more than 190 housing schemes located in every county in England and South Wales and has become one of the leading voluntary agencies for former prisoners.

Defeat likely in abortion vote

Leading Roman Catholic peers look certain to lose their final attempt today to tighten the abortion laws during this Parliament.

The Duke of Norfolk, the premier Roman Catholic peer, Lord Rawlinson of Ewell, Lady Cox and Lord Ashbourne will lead the protests against late abortions when the Lords debate amendments made by MPs to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology bill.

"They have tabled an amendment demanding that doctors must try to deliver babies alive unless they are suffering from a life-threatening handicap. The whips predict that it will be defeated."

Thatcher costs £8m

The prime minister cost the taxpayer more than £8 million in the last financial year according to figures she issued yesterday.

In Commons written replies, Margaret Thatcher said that the total cost of all her offices in 1989-90 was £7,704,396. That included salaries, national pension liability, and the grant to the Chequers Trust. She said that the total cost of her travel and that of her staff during the year was £948,656. Official hospitality cost £27,427.

Devolution 'disaster'

Malcolm Rifkind, Scottish secretary, firmly rejected demands for independence or devolution for Scotland. At Commons question time he said that Scotland would pay a devastating price for such policies.

Labour's proposals for a Scottish assembly would bring extra taxes, he said, and the Scottish National party's plans for an independent country would mean that Scots living in England would be foreigners.

Ewing elected by SNP

Margaret Ewing, Scottish Nationalist MP for Moray, has been unanimously re-elected as leader of the SNP group of five MPs in Parliament. She has been leader since 1987. Mrs Ewing was nominated by Alex Salmond, MP for Banff and Buchan, the overall party leader.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Prime Minister. Debate on public accounts committee reports on sale of Rover and of Royal Ordnance. Lords (3): Human fertilisation and embryology bill. Commons amendments.

By the time he's grown up
our controllers will be handling
real aircraft from here



Between now and the turn of the century the number of air travellers is expected to double.

To meet the increased demand, the Civil Aviation Authority is investing more than £750 million in new air traffic control facilities.

More than £200 million of this will be spent on a new air traffic control centre to be built near Fareham, Hampshire.

Using radio and radar communications links, it will handle aircraft flying over the whole of England and Wales.

Our engineers are providing the latest systems and, when we combine these with the proven skills of our air traffic controllers, we will be able to handle 40% more flights.

The new centre will be operational in 1996 - in good time to meet the demands of the next generation's air travellers.



CAA House 45-59 Kingsway London WC2B 6TE

Hurd lost in political minefield of Middle East

From RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

DOUGLAS Hurd, the foreign secretary, said yesterday that he was "too well-trained to be angry", as he surveyed the debris of his Middle East mission from a sofa in the British consulate in east Jerusalem. But he had the ebullient and slightly dazed look of a man who — like so many before him — had entered the minefield of Arab-Israeli politics with what he thought was due care and attention only to find mines blowing up all around his feet.

Even for someone of Mr Hurd's skill and experience, the passions aroused in the aftermath of the Temple Mount killings 10 days ago have proved too hot to handle. Both Israelis and Palestinians are on short fuses. "You cannot please both sides at the best of times," one diplomat said yesterday.

According to this view, Mr Hurd issued a tough condemnation of Israel before arriving, failed to follow it through on arrival in order not to offend his already displeased Israeli hosts, but in doing so thoroughly alienated the Palestinian side.

On the Israeli side, Mr Hurd, despite a new and warm relationship with David Levy, the Israeli foreign minister, evidently failed to persuade the right-wing government of Yitzhak Shamir to change its mind and accept the United Nations mission investigating the Temple Mount affair. Mr Hurd's argument that "the last thing we want is a long run of endless security council debates on Arab-Israeli affairs fell on deaf ears."

On the Palestinian side, the mine which exploded yesterday took the form of a leaked misquotation. Palestinian anger, already fuelled by what the Arabs see as equivocal British support for the Palestinian cause, boiled over when Mr Hurd was quoted by the Israeli media as having told members of the Knesset (parliament) foreign affairs committee in private session that he was "absolutely opposed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state".

Mr Hurd insisted he had made no such statement. He had only reiterated the British view that the Palestinians should have self-determination, and whether this led to a state of Palestine would be a matter for negotiation.

By the time this clarification reached Palestinian leaders, however, the damage was done. Twenty-eight leading Palestinians due to meet the foreign secretary called off the encounter, reportedly at the instigation of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a PLO faction.

Some Israelis said the leaked report was a deliberate act by one of the three Israeli

MPs Mr Hurd met; Eliahu Ben-Elissar and Uzi Landau of Likud, and Yitzhak Rabin of Labour. The Palestinians, sources said, had fallen into an Israeli trap by taking Israeli media leaks at face value instead of waiting to see what Mr Hurd had to say.

Deliberate or not, the damage caused by the misquotation could have been limited. The report was the main story on Israeli television news on Tuesday evening, while Mr Hurd was at a dinner given by Mr Levy. Yesterday, however, Mr Hurd said he had known nothing of the report until yesterday morning, when it was reproduced in Israeli newspapers.

Having failed to issue a correction on Tuesday evening, British officials sought to reassure Radwan Abu Ayash, head of the Arab Journalists Association and one of the leading Palestinians due to meet Mr Hurd when he telephoned the British consulate at 8.30am. By then, Mr Hurd was on a tour of United Nations headquarters and St John's eye hospital in east Jerusalem.

It was not until mid-morning, when Mr Hurd reached a centre for the disabled at Beit Jalla on the West Bank that he challenged the Israeli reports. Answering questions from an Arab physiotherapy student, 22, the foreign secretary said: "There is something in the newspaper which is not right." He added: "Can I say something to you? We believe the Palestinians should have the right to determine their own future. We do not say there cannot be a state, and we do not say there should be a state: it is for the Palestinians to decide their future."

For the Arab leaders waiting in Jerusalem, this was not enough. They were in any case incensed by Mr Hurd's statement — accurately reported — that although the PLO should be involved in the peace process, it had "made a big mistake by finding excuses for the invasion of Kuwait".

"Britain clearly does not recognise that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians, nor does it want us to have a state," said Professor Saeb Erakat, of An-Najah university in Nablus. "But these form the backbone of our policy."

The Palestinians were dismissive of the UN resolution on Temple Mount. Just as Mr Levy had condemned the British compromise draft as "one-sided and hypocritical", so the Palestinians attacked it in a statement handed to Mr Hurd as "a delayed and diluted resolution" from an organisation which had failed for 23 years to end "the brutal and oppressive Israeli occupation".

Leading article, page 15



Taking cover: a Palestinian woman about to try on a gas mask at the village of Beit Hanina, in east Jerusalem, as Israeli troops and civil defence personnel began distributing anti-chemical warfare kits to Arabs

Moscow's optimistic envoy tries to draw hope from Iraqi position

By OUR DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

IF THERE were a prize for refusing to take no for an answer, Yevgeni Primakov would surely be a candidate.

President Gorbachev appears to have instructed him to keep alive hopes that Iraq could be persuaded to withdraw from Kuwait in return for concessions. The Soviet emissary continued yesterday to promote that idea despite outright rejection by both Baghdad and Washington. Britain is equally opposed.

Mr Primakov, making a tour of Western capitals, has hinted that terms for an Iraqi pullout were discussed when he met President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad last week. It is thought that these would include a revision of the Iraq-Kuwait border giving Baghdad the whole of the Rumaila oilfield and the islands of Bubiyan and Warba, a secure outlet to the Gulf, and a diplomatic arrangement to save face.

Baghdad strongly denied this yesterday, insisting that it will never give up what has become its 19th province. The official news agency INA quoted an information ministry source as saying: "No Iraqi official has or ever will say that Kuwait is not part of Iraq. Iraq does not have two policies."

It was not Baghdad's first denial, but Mr Primakov seemed to have ignored previous statements. He told reporters in Rome on Tuesday that Moscow was "optimistic despite everything — otherwise we wouldn't be here". He believed that Iraq would be ready to negotiate a settlement provided the West did not set ultimatums or threaten military action.

His reason for saying this in Rome was that Italy holds the presidency of the European Community, whose foreign ministers are to meet in Luxembourg on Monday. The Italians are better disposed towards a negotiated approach than the British or French.

The suspicion in Washington and London is that Mr Primakov's mission has much to do with Moscow's wish to avoid having to send forces to the Gulf. Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign minister, has said it would do so only in response to a security council resolution setting up a UN force, and has promised that the Soviet parliament would have a chance to vote on it.

President Bush is to see Mr Primakov on Friday and will want to know whether his hopes are based on more than wishful thinking.

Whitehall sources believe that a new map of Kuwait which Baghdad has been sent to Iraqi missions abroad forms part of a confusion strategy. It shows that only the southern part of Kuwait lies within the new 19th province. A line has been drawn across the old map and the northern part transferred to the former province of Basra, renamed Saddamiyat al-Mithla.

As this northern part includes the Rumaila oilfield and the strategic islands, the map has encouraged speculation that Baghdad might negotiate its withdrawal.

Both Washington and London say they will settle for nothing less than a total withdrawal without face-saving compromises.

They are: Tony Millson and Donald Macanlay, John Raine, second secretary; Martin Roper, vice consul; David McDonough, immigration officer; David Belgrave, assistant management officer; Adam Perks, registrar; Brian McKeith, security officer.

Baghdad's move puts them among the 400 Britons still living in Iraq and not under detention. A further 300 Britons are detained in Iraq under the human shield policy after being transferred from Kuwait.

Mr al-Salhi was also told that Britain reserves its right to claim compensation for losses caused by the annexation of Kuwait. The atmosphere of his 11-minute meeting with David Gore-Booth, assistant under-secretary, was described as "correct", usually a diplomatic way of saying stiff.

In the meantime several British women evacuated from Kuwait and Iraq are considering returning to join their husbands, despite strong advice from the Foreign Of-

fice and the Gulf Support Group not to go.

The Iraqi Embassy in London said it had issued several visas and would welcome requests from other women wishing to return. The Foreign Office described this as "cynical manipulation" and said the women would be taking a great risk. Joanna Copley, co-founder of the Gulf Support Group, also advised women to refuse.

This is a further example of the Iraqi's flagrant disregard for international law," a foreign office spokesman said, describing it as a breach of articles 40 and 44 of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic status. Azmi al-Salhi, the Iraqi ambassador, was summoned to the Foreign Office on Tuesday and told of Britain's displeasure.

Britain is one of only six countries still defying an Iraqi order to close their embassies in Kuwait. Others, including the French embassy, are likely to withdraw this week after exhausting their supplies of food, water and fuel.

The British embassy was run down from 22 to ten diplomats before Iraq's deadline of August 24, and most of those withdrawn were sent home, as were the dependants. Britain then cut the number to four by sending six to Baghdad under Iraqi military escort. A further two were pulled out ten days ago, leaving only Michael Weston, the ambassador, and Larry Banks still in the building, which remains blockaded by Iraqi troops.

British protest after Baghdad rejects status of diplomats

By ANDREW McEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN has protested to Baghdad after being told that its diplomats evacuated from Kuwait will not be given diplomatic status in Iraq.

Iraq said that the eight diplomats would be treated as ordinary citizens. This will be seen as implicit warning that they might join the 300 Britons detained under Iraq's "human shield" policy, though no explicit threat has been made.

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Britons in 'foolhardy' desert escape

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THREE Britons have escaped from Iraq by driving 200 miles across the desert to Saudi Arabia, keeping off the roads, it was disclosed yesterday.

Their initiative proved controversial, being seen as courageous by some but foolhardy by others. A hospital which employs two of them criticised it as "dangerous and irresponsible", and it was contrary to British Embassy advice.

Harold Walker, the British ambassador, yesterday repeated his view that the 400 Britons still in Iraq but not detained should not try to escape. There should be no

heroics and they should not run risks. Whitehall sources confirmed that the government took the same view.

One of those who escaped was named as Luke Costes, aged 38, from south-west England, but the identity of the others was not disclosed. All had asked British diplomats in Saudi Arabia for anonymity.

Two of the men were male nurses from a hospital operated by Parc, a subsidiary of the Irish airline Aer Lingus. Peter Keenan, Parc's manager in Dublin, said: "It is a very dangerous thing to have attempted. Thankfully they are

safe and well. But to some extent it is irresponsible in terms of the implications it might have for everybody else who has remained in Baghdad."

"It was done against the strong advice of both the British and Irish ambassadors in Iraq," Mr Keenan said there would be a feeling of some concern among staff remaining at the Ibn Al Bitar hospital. However, he did not believe the escape would jeopardise the "special status" granted to the hospital by the Iraqi authorities last week.

Parc has 430 employees at the hospital, including 200 Irish and 43 British staff. Last month, three Irishmen unconnected with Parc appeared in an Iraqi court charged with trying to leave the country without the proper documentation.

● TOKYO: Iraq has released a Japanese hostage into the custody of the Japanese embassy in Baghdad and two or three others would be freed on Thursday, Kyodo news agency said (Reuters reports).

Japanese television said that Iraq planned to release four Japanese in the next two days, according to the chairman of the Iraqi national assembly, Saadi Mahdi Saleh.

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Foreign accent

New York — An American with no knowledge of foreign languages began speaking with a Scandinavian accent after a stroke, a researcher claims.

The man had foreign accent syndrome, a rare condition that scientists say may shed light on how different parts of the brain contribute to spoken language. (AP)

Travel time cut

Berne — Because of decisions taken by the European Goods Trains Timetable Conference, travel times are to be shortened on some Swiss railway routes to northern Germany and Austria beginning in 1991. (AFP)

'The Captain' fills vacuum left by Aoun

From JUAN CARLOS GUMUCIO IN BIKFAYA, LEBANON

"THE Captain" is a big, balding militiaman with a thick brown moustache, designer spectacles and, since the defeat of General Michel Aoun five days ago, is playing a new role in the Christian enclave of Lebanon. As the commander of the Syrian Social National Party in the mountains northeast of Beirut, he and his men have gladly filled the vacuum left by the retreat of General Aoun's forces.

Under the Syrian-backed plan to extend President Hrawi's authority to the enclave, the Captain would have to disarm his men and leave. But yesterday, as President Hrawi's tanks moved slowly into the mountains, he was not contemplating moving. Far from it. Sipping coffee and smoking cigarettes with Lebanese army officers at the SSNP's new office, just off Bikfaya's main street, the Captain — he likes to be called

that and would not reveal his name — looks like a man with a mission. Sooner or later, his ragtag army of bearded youths with red headbands and new fatigues could be fighting on behalf of the Syrians.

The mainly Christian SSNP is a curious and ambitious Lebanese organisation. It advocates Syrian nationalism and proposes the unification of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Kuwait and Cyprus. Its roots are in the mountains of Lebanon. So, when General Aoun's 5th Brigade was defeated in the nearby hills of Dhour Choueir on Saturday, the Captain led his lorries and military vehicles into the heart of the rival Phalange Party's country.

He remembers his entrance into Bikfaya well. "Here I was driving my 'Jeep' when I saw this Phalangist who killed my brother Walid in 1980. He threw himself at me. He was

crying, pleading with me to spare his life. I could have shot him right there and he knew it. But I told him that I had not come to seek revenge. He could not believe it," he added with a chuckle.

Then there is a long puff of smoke. "We are here for different reasons," he says. One of them, the Captain says, is to hold Bikfaya until the Lebanese Army arrives in full. But perhaps the most important — which he does not admit — is connected with Syria's mid-term objective in Lebanon: the neutralisation of the Phalangist "Lebanese Forces" militia of Samir Geagea. The Captain refers to them as "the most dangerous and destructive thing in Lebanon."

Despite Mr Geagea's welcome of the Syrian army presence in east Beirut, he still refuses to give up the strip of coastal territory running north from Beirut's port. President

Hrawi and the Syrians have apparently decided to be patient with Mr Geagea.

The government is expected to be reorganised next week and it is expected that Mr Geagea will be invited to join it, provided he dismantles his powerful militia. If he does not, the Syrians will probably ask the Captain and Elie Hobeika, the leader of the Syrian-wing of the "Lebanese Forces" to persuade him.

Mr Hobeika, the militia commander who led the massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Chatilla refugee camps in 1982, has personal scores to settle with Mr Geagea. He was ousted as head of the "Lebanese Forces" in 1986 and forced out of the enclave by Mr Geagea for being too complacent with Damascus.

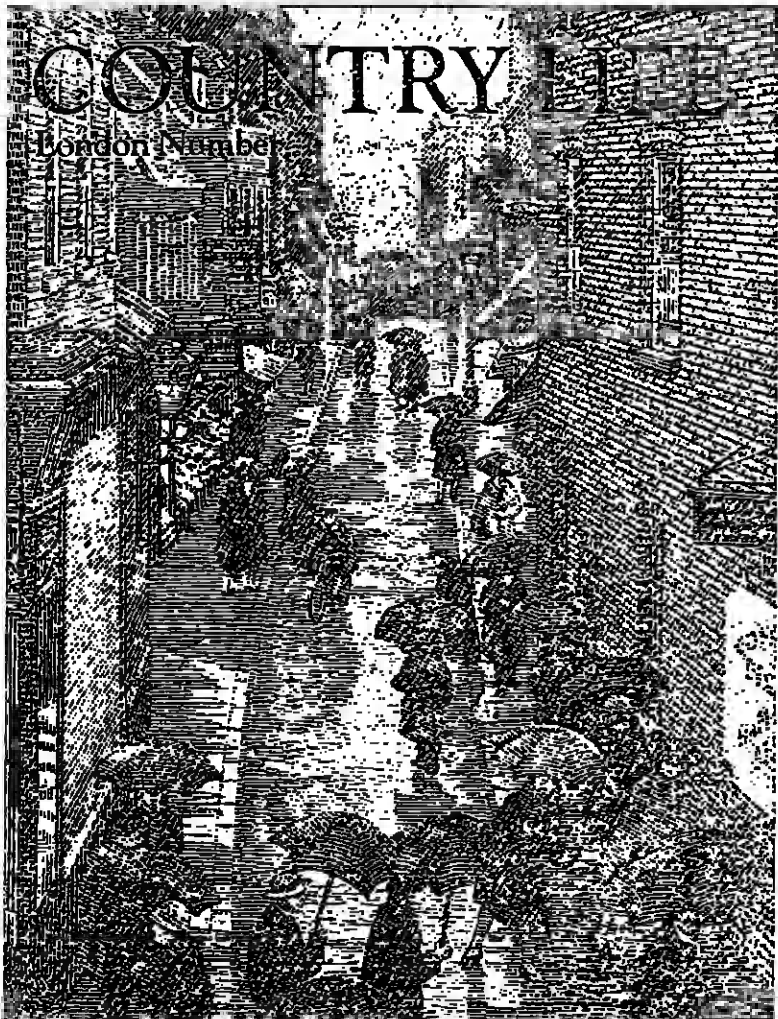
Mr Hobeika's return to the enclave on the back of the Syrian tanks has automatically provoked fears of a new

inter-Christian conflict. Mr Georges Sadea, the leader of the Phalange party, the largest Christian party, has already accused Mr Hobeika of harassment and revenge attacks and yesterday warned that his followers are ready to confront threats.

The Syrians are making it clear that the SSNP is bound to make a comeback. On Tuesday night Syrian soldiers were reported to have freed a number of inmates from the Roumieh prison. Yesterday, the newspaper *An-Nida*, the organ of the pro-Syrian Lebanese communist party, reported that among those freed was Habib al-Charouti, the reputed assassin of president-elect Bashir Gemayel, who was killed by a bomb explosion in 1982. Mr Charouti is one of the heroes of the SSNP.

And, just like the Captain's men, he could become an unexpected nightmare for the "Lebanese Forces".

London Number



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 - Food on the walls: architecture on the plate: the capital's latest restaurants
 - Post-Modernist post haste: the scaffolding comes down on London's newest buildings
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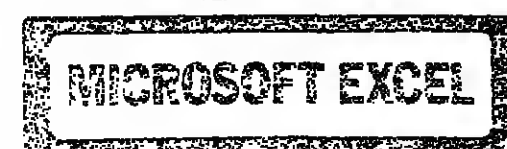
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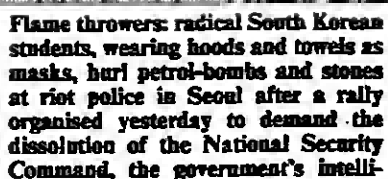
FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR IN WASHINGTON

The House bill, which contains the largest set of tax increases and benefit cuts proposed on Capitol Hill, was passed amid acrimonious scenes. It is constructed to raise more than \$175 billion (£89 billion) in new taxes over

Mr Bush, as well as higher rates for top income-tax payers. Republican senators continued to make clear that they would accept no rise in income tax rates, even in return for capital gains concessions. Some Republican votes are almost certain to be needed

government's spending authority fall and to mount a heightened campaign to blame the Democrats for the consequences. Democrats are increasingly convinced, however, that they have the president in a corner and that Mr. Bush will find it hard to deflect public anger over a closure of government services. The Republicans are braced to receive the brunt of the voters' rage on November 6, and although this may not cost many seats, it could be a decisive blow against the party taking control of the Senate during the Bush presidency.

Anatole Kaletsky, page 14



gence arm. Meanwhile, in talks in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang yesterday, South Korean demands for mutual recognition were rejected because "such an action would perpetuate the peninsula's division" (AP reports from Seoul). Yon Hyong

Mak, North Korea's prime minister, meeting Kang Young Hoon, his South Korean counterpart, said the South's policy was aimed at maintaining the status quo. Although North Korea's reaction was expected, South Korean officials viewed it as discouraging.

FROM ANDREW LYCETT
IN ADDIS ABABA

They began a new drive last weekend. "We call them musclebrains, because they can't think," said Wolde, 22, a university arts student. "They're not interested if you're a student. They throw away your ID card, give you a gun, and put you on a helicopter to a training camp in the south." Recruits spend six weeks there before joining the armies in Eritrea and Tigré.

Wolde is one of the growing band of Ethiopians disaffected from President Mengistu's military regime and, unlike even a couple of years ago, willing to say so. In May, after the execution of 12 generals involved in a coup plot

FROM GAVIN BELL
IN JOHANNESBURG

Dr Treurnicht received a standing ovation at a public rally in Durban when he declared the National Party had lost its mandate to govern as it no longer represented the majority of whites.

By M. G. G. PILLAI IN KUALA LUMPUR

The PBS-led state government has felt short-changed by the federal government. It

Tunku Razaleigh has now won over three parties from the National Front. The PBS is expected to be returned in Sabah. He only has to be returned in another 40 constituencies to make the prime minister's position shaky.

[illegible]

Ukrainian hunger-strikers get their first taste of victory

WEARING a white head band with the inscription "I'm on hunger strike," one activist swigged water under the warm autumn sun. "It's my tenth day without food but I do take water," Taras said. Some 200 others, recognisable by their headbands, are doing likewise. A few have been on absolute deprivation but of these, two were taken away by ambulance and put in intensive care yesterday.

Around Taras, aged 30, supporters in an assortment of coloured headwear moved about with herb tea, fruit juices and water for those in white headbands. Among the recipients was Zosya, a grandmother aged 53. "My granddaughter joined the strike and I

Ukraine's president has thrown the public a bone with Vitali Masol's resignation as prime minister. But as Nick Worrall reports from Kiev, that may not stop clamour for reform

stand for what she stands for so I joined her," Zosya said. It was her third day without food.

Next to her, amid the hundred or so tents, two teenage girls sat sipping herb tea. "It was a great joy for us to hear that Masol would resign," said Natalya. "Yes, our first big victory," said Olyana. "We'll be here until they give us everything we want." They seemed to be having a good time. So did the thousands

of passers-by, many of whom were shouting in support. Others bought flowers from street sellers and handed them to students.

The huge crowds packing the city centre and constant disruption from marches have provoked fears that the conservative authorities will use force to clear the city. That worry increased when students succeeded three days ago in setting up a small 12-tent camp outside the main door of parliament, set on a hill above the mighty river Dnepr. Some deputies from the 239-strong majority conservative bloc of the Communist Party, which dominates the 450-seat parliament, are calling for a state of emergency.

There are 33 hunger strikers here, eight of them opposition deputies. By yesterday, more than 1,000 police had been drafted in to protect parliament. Only regular uniforms were visible around the building, but men in riot gear could be seen in the forest near by and two vehicles with water cannons were outside the health ministry. Dozens of lorries and buses betrayed the presence of police reservists.

Amid a sudden commotion in the crowd, a gap opened and three priests and two nuns from the Ukrainian Catholic Church, banned by Stalin in 1941 and still not officially reinstated by Moscow, walked through to chant blessings to the activists.

A benign waterer was buried Major-General Valentin Nedrigailo, commander of Kiev police, imposing in grey gaiters, red patches and capband. Asked if he would be ordered to disperse the students by force, he said that since Kiev council had agreed to allow the protest, his men's function was simply to keep order.

"This we are doing," he said. "And we are also providing protection for the demonstrators against those who disagree with them. This has brought us closer together." So did he sympathise with their demands? "I think everything they want will be fulfilled in time. But perhaps the young people are a little impatient."

This evoked sharp disagreement from Larissa Skorik, a radical woman deputy who joined the hunger strike last Saturday. "But we are making progress," she said. "The government is frightened by what's happening and there are more than a million people, perhaps two million now, supporting the demonstration. There are tent cities springing up elsewhere in the Ukraine."

But Miss Skorik believed the government could become desperate and resort to military force, as in Azerbaijan in January, when 162 people died, or in Georgia in April 1989, when troops killed 20 demonstrators. "I think, though, that the police would not be happy about violence. It's possible they would even stand between the military and the people."

President Leonid Kravchuk has thrown the demonstrators a bone with the announcement that his prime minister will resign. But with popular opposition growing daily he may not be able to resist pressure to go further. And that would signal the end of communist power in the Ukraine which, after Russia, is the Soviet Union's most populated and productive republic.

Sombre MPs prepare reply on Gorbachev market reform

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

COMMITTEES and commissions of the Soviet parliament met behind closed doors yesterday to draft their response to what is regarded as positively President Gorbachev's last word on shifting the nation from central planning to a market economy without provoking a revolution.

Committee members would say nothing about their deliberations, which were believed to be subdued. A deputy chairman of the economic reform commission said its meeting had been completed within the morning and he did not want to say more because his words would "only be distorted". What had happened was "no subject for a telephone conversation", but he would not agree to a meeting.

However, the silence from the committee rooms was more than compensated for by the uproar occasioned by a stinging attack from Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian Federation, on the new economic document. His immediate dismissal of it as an attempt to keep the "command administrative system" in power was widely interpreted as marking the end of the uneasy coalition he had joined with President Gorbachev at the beginning of August and the start of open warfare between the Soviet leadership and the federation. There are more subtle interpretations of his remarks, however, in which he was careful not to close the door completely on co-operation with Mr Gorbachev. According to this alternative view, Mr Yeltsin, a master of the new-style Soviet politics, was making his first real bid for a place in the leadership, not instead of Mr Gorbachev, but alongside him.

Strikingly absent from the options Mr Yeltsin outlined for Russia in the light of the new economic document was any suggestion that the federation should split from the union. His programme has called only for Russia to be allowed to run its own affairs within a looser federal state.

The first option he proposed on Tuesday was for the Russian Federation to introduce its own currency and tax system and demand a division of property between the centre and the republic — but not a political division. His second option was for partial co-operation with the centre in the expectation that the centre would abandon its diluted version after six months and join the faster Russian programme.

His third option, however, was the most telling. This was for a national coalition government in which some ministers would be appointed by the president, and others by "supporters of radical change", presumably including himself. The only condition he set was the departure of Nikolai Ryzhkov, the prime minister.

The terms in which Mr Yeltsin criticised Mr Gorbachev's latest document lend credence to the view that his move was more a bid for joint power than a declaration of war. He complained that the proposed retention by the centre of many powers amounted to an attempt to preserve the old bureaucratic system.

But Mr Yeltsin must have been well aware of the president's views. Mr Gorbachev has remained unwavering on three points: central fiscal control; a single currency; and a single customs regime. His priority has always been to keep the Soviet Union a recognisably single state.

This aim was partially disguised last month when he expressed his preference for the "500-day" programme, drafted by Stanislaw Shatalin, over the more conservative offering from Mr Ryzhkov. But when Mr Shatalin claimed that Mr Gorbachev had accepted 99 per cent of his plan, he was right only so far as the number of words was concerned. He neglected to say that the 1 per cent of changes were crucial because they included reinstating the primacy of the centre over the republics on key questions, especially money.

The latest document simply spells out the implications of those changes — something Mr Yeltsin would have been quite capable of doing six weeks ago. That he has spoken out only now suggests that he has judged this the best time to seize his chance.

● Russian resignation: The co-author of the radical plan for the transition to the market economy resigned yesterday as deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, Tass said. Grigori Yavlinsky said he was quitting because it was unrealistic to hope that Russia could carry out the plan if the central government passed Mr Gorbachev's more moderate version. (Reuters)

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Leading article, page 15

Crime syndicates tighten grip on Italy

FROM PAUL BOMPARD IN ROME

THE Mafia, the Camorra and the 'Ndrangheta are increasing their hold over southern Italy, gaining political control and economic influence over entire areas, according to a report by Italy's intelligence services.

The report was presented by Giulio Andreotti, the prime minister, only hours after the resignation on Tuesday of Antonio Gava, the interior minister, and as the government announced new measures to try to combat the spreading plague of organised crime.

While the greatest alarm is caused by the growing political

and economic weight of criminal organisations, the crime rate is also rising sharply. In the first six months of 1990, in the southern regions of Sicily, Calabria and Campania, there were 774 murders compared with fewer than 700 in the same period last year. Armed robberies also increased by about 20 per cent to 5,435 over the same period. In 1989, there were more than two million crimes reported all over Italy, compared with 740,000 in 1980.

According to the report, the Sicilian Mafia has 180 "families", with 4,000 members. In Calabria, the 'Ndrangheta has 140 "caches", or gangs, with about 5,000 members.

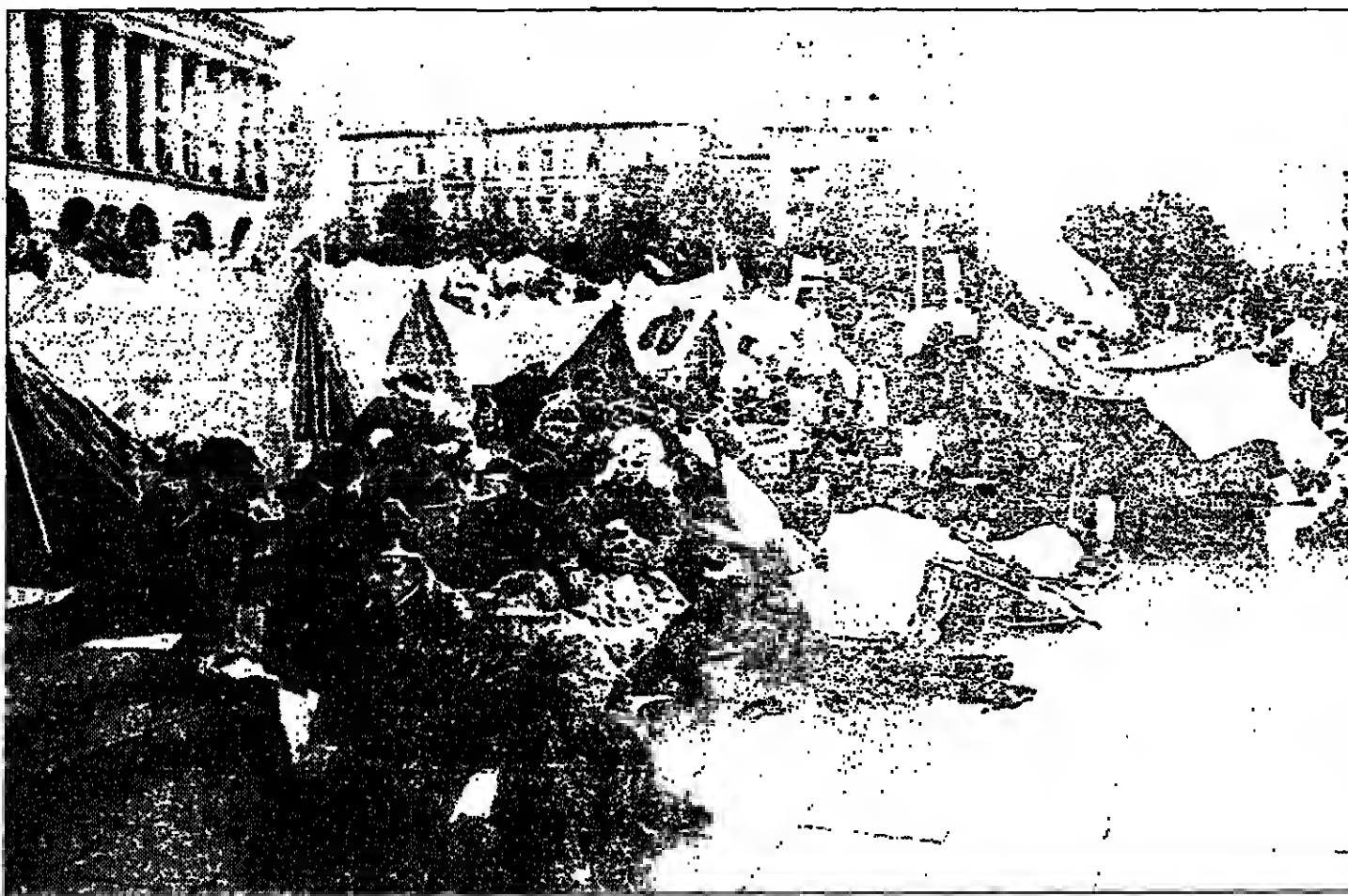
In Campania, the region around Naples, the Camorra is divided between the older and more powerful "clans", specialising in international drug trafficking, and a host of minor "clans" which operate on a local basis all over southern Italy — a total of more than 100 clans and 6,000 people.

There are thus 15,000 full-time operatives of three inter-linked organisations with, according to Signor Andreotti, connections with international crime and drug trafficking syndicates and sophisticated money recycling operations through finance houses and property firms in Milan.

Signor Andreotti said that on

their home ground the organisations "influence the administration of the state and local institutions through murder, intimidation, and an occult guidance of the voters". President Cossiga declared recently that "entire areas of the national territory are beyond the control of the state".

New measures announced by the government include stiffer sentences without parole, closer control of the allocation of public contracts, and tighter weapons laws. Many Italians fear, however, that organised crime is now a part of the nation's economic and political reality.



Opposition camp: Ukrainian nationalists protesting at their camp outside the Kiev parliament, where dozens have been on hunger strike in protest over proposals to transfer hard-currency earnings to Moscow. They are demanding the dissolution of parliament

EC farm compromise in the balance

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN BRUSSELS

AMID rising tempers and growing confusion, European Community farm ministers meet in Luxembourg again tomorrow to seek agreement on a compromise package of agricultural subsidy cuts. But Brussels was itself locked in fierce argument yesterday over the controversial proposals, which critics say will ruin any chance of agreement with the United States in the current world trade negotiations.

A commission spokesman yesterday insisted that Ray MacSharry, the agricultural commissioner, had not given unconditional backing to the late-night compromise on Tuesday, which proposed special aid to cushion the blow to European farmers and significantly tough-

ened the EC's posture towards America.

The attempt to tone down Mr MacSharry's original 30 per cent cut in internal price subsidies deletes his offer of an 8 per cent increase in the amount of oil-seed and cereal subsidies the US can export duty-free to the EC. This sop to European farmers, worried about US encroachment in this market, will infuriate American farmers who depend on Europe for these valuable exports. Withdrawing the offer would also deprive the Community of its last bargaining card in the effort to get Washington to accept price and export subsidy cuts lower than those tabled by America in Geneva on Monday.

Tomorrow's meeting risks yet

another restatement of the same entrenched positions. Commission sources said that the whole issue might be taken over by foreign ministers meeting on Monday.

Mr MacSharry warned EC ministers on Tuesday that if they did not agree then and there to the compromise, he could not present his Brussels colleagues with a fait accompli that would persuade them to accept the modifications.

Fraus Andriessen, the external trade commissioner, is leading the fight for a less protectionist Community offer in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Sources said yesterday's commission row pitting Mr Andriessen against Mr MacSharry was likely to be protracted.

The compromise, drawn up by the Italian presidency softens the commission proposal in three ways: it insists that export subsidies — the real target of US wrath — cannot be considered separately from the negotiations; it promises that sacrifices by farmers would be shared out in an "equitable" way, taking into account the particular difficulties of such members as the Mediterranean countries; and it commits the EC to a "fresh approach" to the Common Agricultural Policy — a phrase designed to win the approval of Britain.

John Gummer, the agricultural secretary, said the EC's dithering played right into the hands of America, which has already lined up considerable support in GATT for drastic cuts in farm subsidies.

Croats and Slovenes reject central rule

FROM DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

YUGOSLAVIA was panned closer to breaking up after Slovenia's representative stormed out of a closed meeting of the Yugoslav state presidency on Tuesday. Slovenia is threatening to do so again during the federal parliament's session, while Croatia has rejected a federal plan that would reshape Yugoslavia under a strong central government.

The Slovene newspaper, *Delo*, said that the state presidency meeting had shown that constructive talks on different ideas about Yugoslavia's future were impossible as the atmosphere in the country was rising to fever pitch. It quoted Janez Drnovsek, Slovenia's representative on the state presidency, as saying that there was no willingness to discuss any other option except the one presented by Serbia and endorsed by President Jovic, himself a Serb.

President Jovic was due to present to parliament last night the draft for the future federal structure of Yugoslavia, but the session was delayed after the representatives of Slovenia and Croatia said they would boycott parliament unless the confederal option was given equal treatment. Reaffirming Croatia's position in even stronger words than hitherto, Franjo Tudjman, Cro-

atia's president, told a rally attended by several hundred thousand people in Zagreb: "There will never again be an anti-democratic power on Croatian soil, and in particular, there cannot be a greater Serbia, nor a unitarian Yugoslavia." He added that should Croatia's sovereignty be threatened, the entire nation would come to its defence and, if necessary, use force.



Return favour: Franjo Tudjman, the president of Croatia, waves to the crowd after restoring a statue of a Croat hero to Zagreb

Serb uprising leaves vital port isolated

FROM RICHARD BASSETT IN GRACAC

THE Mediterranean Express comes to an abrupt halt an hour north of Knin. Beyond the station of Gracac, in southern Croatia, the line stretches through a barren landscape of bleak rock, uninviting even in less-troubled times. This is the fault line between Croat and Serb, and although nominally Croatia extends its rule from here down to the coast of Dalmatia, the next 50 miles are a no-go area. Since last month, when the Serbs in Knin seized arms to prevent what they believed was a Croat attempt to tighten Zagreb's control over the region, rail and road traffic has dwindled to a trickle. Shots have been fired at Croatian lorries attempting to reach the coast. There are daily reports of bombs and mines along the railway line.

"You must leave the train here. We cannot guarantee your safety beyond Gracac," the ticket collector, a Croat, explained to a handful of passengers hoping to reach the coastal city of Split before nightfall. The passengers shuffled off, talking of making a detour of 350 miles through Bosnia.

Trains now rarely go beyond Gracac. Nearby, road traffic ceases after dusk, though a Serb taxi driver runs the gauntlet of roadblocks, his Belgrade number-plate acting as a talisman.

At Gracac and at other stations further up the line towards Zagreb, tons of freight have been apparently abandoned in railway wagons. Destined for ships in Split and Zadar, their failure to reach the Dalmatian coast is costing Croatian businesses more than £500,000 a week. Passenger traffic has virtually ceased and at the local office of Generalisturist, the Croatian tourist agency, managers say the firm faces losses this season running into millions of pounds.

By controlling Knin, the Serbs paralyse the most important railway junction in Croatia, and attempts by the Croatian authorities to play down the conflict must ultimately fail as the economic burden cripples more and more of Zagreb's foreign-trade companies.

In Knin itself, life appears normal. Serbs say their action is designed only to protect themselves against the Zagreb government ruled by a nationalist, right-wing party under General Franjo Tudjman. As far as the Serbs are concerned, this party is "fascist" and bears a strong similarity to the nazi puppet Ustasha state, which ruled Croatia during the second world war.

France to restructure nuclear defence capability

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

BEHIND a barrage of leaks to the press, the French government is preparing a comprehensive defence review that will end three decades of reliance on the present mix of its nuclear "dissuasion forces". Before the end of this week, President Mitterrand is expected to announce details of France's response to the new strategic challenges of the 1990s and beyond, possibly involving a decision to downgrade, or even abandon, further development of the nation's ground-to-ground nuclear missile capability.

According to observers here, M Mitterrand, as head of state, may opt to retain only the airborne- and submarine-launched missile components of the independent deterrent. A few days ago, Michel Rocard, the prime minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the defence minister, and the military high command were summoned to the Elysée for a briefing on what had been decided.

A subsequent, evidently well-informed, report in the financial daily *Les Echos*, said defence insiders considered the French nuclear submarine force, five-strong with another under construction, as "the heart of our system of dissuasion". There could, therefore, be no question of sacrificing any aspect of that programme in the name of a "peace dividend"; defence ministry projections envisage the submarines remaining pivotal for another 30 years.

Intriguingly, there is general agreement here that the British government could play a key role in the decision whether to reduce the ground-based or airborne nuclear arsenal. Advocates of increased spending on a new air-delivered weapon for use with France's advanced Rafale fighter say that approval from Margaret Thatcher for joint development of the proposed longer-range missile (a decision is expected before the end of the year) would provide a significant financial incentive for going ahead.

By some accounts, the French would look to London to chip in with Fr 5 billion (£500 million) for the project, which could provide the British nuclear strike force of Tornado aircraft with its required new missile. It is acknowledged, however, that a competing programme put forward by America represents a threat to French hopes.

The fate of France's ground-to-ground nuclear force, 18 S3 missiles in silos on the Albi plateau in southern France, will be sealed if, as some observers anticipate, M Mitterrand opts to drop a Fr 30 billion modernisation programme. That would mean in effect maintaining Albi until the S3s become obsolete at the end of the century, leaving the field to the submarine-airborne systems.

M Mitterrand hopes that unveiling this programme will end discontent from the military establishment, where complaints about "paralysis" in defence thinking are freely expressed. It is not just a question of adjusting budgets or juggling arms projects, critics argue: France must decide now what tasks the armed forces should perform.

That objective has not been helped by the fighting among the different service chiefs about where the spending axe should fall. Nor does continuing uncertainty over the future of M Chevènement — whose evident lack of enthusiasm for the main thrust of French policy in the Gulf has complicated all defence decisions — make a smooth transition easy.

As it is, the Gulf confrontation has focused attention on France's ability to throw conventional forces swiftly into a hotbed far beyond the old "European theatre". The simultaneous use of *les paras* to hold the ring in Rwanda merely underlines the case for increased strategic flexibility.

Among the top brass in every service, there is a feeling that the debate, which officially concerns defence planning for 1992-96, comes at a moment when they are vulnerable to pressure for big spending cuts. The transformation of the geopolitical background against which the French military establishment must fight, against all the other national priorities, has sharpened the belief that it is crucial to get it right this time.

Democrats misdirected

Anatole Kaletsky

As the American economy moves into recession, banks teeter on the brink of failure and another government shutdown looms, the world's most powerful nation may appear to be sliding towards political and economic disaster. The truth is less alarming but more complex. America does face a crisis: not of constitutional or economic disintegration, but of ideology.

The fundamental reason President Bush cannot agree a budget with Congress is that struggle between left and right has unexpectedly returned to American politics. For the first time in a decade or more, politicians are asking a taboo question: should the costs of government fall more on the rich or on the poor?

After the long period of false innocence and market-researched consensus that followed the Democrats' crushing defeat in three successive presidential elections, the breaking of the taboo on economic ideology is playing havoc with the rules of the game.

The Democrats' decisive lurch towards ideological warfare came on Tuesday night, when the House of Representatives passed a budget plan built around higher income taxes — an increase from 28 to 33 per cent in the marginal rate on incomes above \$186,000 a year, and a further 10 per cent surcharge on incomes above \$1 million. The ideological import of this was reinforced by Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House tax-writing committee, who was one of the Reagan administration's most powerful collaborators within the Democratic party. "People should be taxed according to their ability to pay," he said on Tuesday.

Simply stated, that means that high-income people should pay more than low-income people.

The panic sown in the White House by this frontal attack on 1980s ideology was illustrated by President Bush's reaction. As public opinion polls revealed that 87 per cent of Americans on incomes below \$30,000 a year disapprove of current economic policies, he answered the call for higher taxes on millionaires with an insurance worthy of Marie Antoinette: "If this budget bill reaches my desk, I will veto it because it raises the income taxes of the working men and women of this country."

But though Mr Bush's initial response to this attack from the left was misjudged, his position is not necessarily weak or even ideologically unsound. Politically, he still has American history, as well as powerful lobbying forces, on his side in the battle against egalitarian taxation. Economically, there are many good arguments against raising income tax rates in America which have hardly been heard in the misleading and casualistic debates of the 1980s about "supply side economics".

The first such argument is that incomes in many parts of America are already quite highly taxed by international standards. The present top marginal rate of 31 per cent appears low, but this takes no account of state and local taxes. For residents of New York City, for instance, the top marginal income tax rate is almost 45 per cent, which is higher than the rates in many European countries.

Americans often forget that their tax system is more comprehensive than most other countries'. Despite the complexity of the tax code, there are probably fewer loopholes and exemptions than, for example, in Britain. The main exception to this is the availability of unlimited deductions for mortgage interest. For the Democrats to attack interest deductions on million-dollar mortgages would be much better than pressing for straight increases in taxes on income — and the party's leadership in the Senate seems to have grasped this, which may facilitate a compromise with the White House.

The third and most important objection to the American left's newfound preoccupation with income taxes is that it distracts them from the real fiscal issue at the heart of the country's social problems. What is unusual about America's fiscal structure compared with that elsewhere is not the low level of income and corporate taxes, but the negligible level of taxes on consumption. In most European countries, consumption taxes such as VAT and petrol duty account for 50 per cent or more of government budgets. In America, indirect taxes contribute only about 10 per cent.

Economists almost unanimously consider consumption taxes preferable to taxes on income, because they have less effect on incentives. But politically, consumption taxes have an even more important advantage. Unlike income tax, which arouses resentment with every pay cheque, indirect taxes become almost invisible after an initial outcry. As a result, governments in other industrialised countries collect on average one-third more revenue than America in relation to gross national product, yet suffer less resistance from taxpayers.

At present, the Democrats resist virtually all consumption taxes with a burning ferocity, on the grounds that they are less progressive than income tax. What they should realise, however, is that the social impact of a fiscal system should be judged as a whole, and not by individual taxes. If higher consumption taxes were to save off cuts in social spending and, ultimately enable America to reach consensus in favour of a welfare safety net for its poorest citizens, the overall effect would be highly progressive.

If the American left really wants a fairer society, rather than merely to score debating points, this is how it should proceed.

back, and to put on her finery. The producers of *The Green Man* did not send a limo, so we drove, left Wimpole Street at 6.15pm, which was wise, for much traffic was moving towards Piccadilly. Special screenings of three 50-minute episodes with Finney and me are, well, special.

I have to admit to an initial disappointment: although the theatre is in her name, the Princess Royal was not present, nor was Mr Albert Finney, nor what you would call much of an audience, nor fans; and we were the only ones who had dressed up for the occasion.

The Green Man — to be shown on BBC TV later this year — starts irreverently with a gruesome scene in a forest, which turns out to be a dream from which Mr Finney wakes in a cold sweat. He then takes a bath, drinks some whisky, has an abortive attempt at emulating his 14-year-old daughter and chats to his elderly and infirm father, who calls him "a bad lad".

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Not a lot happens after that, though we sat through another two hours and 25 minutes of assorted scenes: nothing you would not encounter in an average East Anglian hotel with the possible exception of the many naked women, three ghosts, the gay vicar and the exhumation of a skeleton that looked in good nick considering how long it had lain beneath the soil... but I have said enough. I do not wish to give away the plot, such as it is, after Levin and I had set it all up.

...and moreover

CLEMENT FREUD

The invitation to a special screening of *The Green Man*, starring Albert Finney, has had pride of place on our hall table for some weeks now. "At the Princess Anne Theatre, British Academy of Film and Television Arts, Piccadilly, Tuesday, October 16th at 7pm prompt," it states, and people who came to the flat — the Portuguese Maria who washes and irons, our window cleaner and occasional messengers bearing parcels — were impressed. You can tell.

As an observer of the Hollywood scene and sometime subscriber to *Secrets of the Stars* and *Screen Idols*, I know quite a bit about special screenings. They begin with a stretch limousine taking the artiste to Grauman's Chinese Theatre, where there is a patch of soft cement in which to leave the impression of one's foot, then a saunter along the red carpet beneath the canopy past the gawping, cheering crowd that strains against a wall of good-humoured policemen and into the foyer with its banks of lights and rows of photographers; here the carpet is deeper, and high-heeled container-loads of minicars parade under galleons of mazzetta topped by acres of bouffant hair.

A smile to Myrna Loy, an inclination of the head towards C. Aubrey Smith, oh look, there's Brando again. Next come the posse of journalists with their questions: No, one repeats, we are just good friends; yes, I certainly hope that the great public out there will love the film.

There is something seriously engaging about the movie business in general and first nights in particular, appearing in a production accorded such ritual is quite especially wonderful and yes, I play — as we say in the industry — opposite Finney, though my name is given an inferior position in the credits; this could be to do with the fact that he precedes me in strict alphabetical order.

On Tuesday old Lady F said she would come with me, will it be smart? I told her to take off the sweatshirt I had given her for our ruby wedding outing, the one with A Wife Is Not Just For Christmas printed on the

back, and to put on her finery. The producers of *The Green Man* did not send a limo, so we drove, left Wimpole Street at 6.15pm, which was wise, for much traffic was moving towards Piccadilly. Special screenings of three 50-minute episodes with Finney and me are, well, special.

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Don't all rush to follow Goldsmith



Big names behind greenery: Bradman, McCartney, Goldsmith

Is capitalism compatible with greenery? When the ecology movement was born 20 years ago, its disciples answered "no." The rallying cry of the Club of Rome was zero growth. Since then, the debate has become more complex. Cleaning up pollution is expensive, so wealth must be generated to pay for it. It is the advanced economies that care and spend most on maintaining the environment. Capitalist companies have become more and more concerned to clean up their act, if only for reasons of long-term self-interest. Moreover, the worst environmental degradation was to be found in the non-capitalist economies of Eastern Europe.

The fundamentalist arguments, however, are bound to be re-awakened by the dramatic decision of Sir James Goldsmith, capitalist entrepreneur *par excellence*, to forsake the world of commerce for a life as a benevolent green. Influenced by his brother Teddy, who started *The Ecologist* magazine in 1970, Goldsmith is deserting the world of the deal for a new purity.

The natural reaction, as with all prophets, is to write this off as an act of mild dottiness. But he is not alone. At least three other big businessmen and three former pop stars turned entrepreneur

have signposted the way. Godfrey Bradman, chairman of the Rosehaugh property company, Lord McAlpine, the construction magnate, and Sir Peter Parker, former chairman of British Rail, have all campaigned on green issues.

Adam Faith, the former singer and actor, is co-ordinating a project to save the black rhino in Tanzania. Paul McCartney and Sting are also converts to the green crusade. Their dedication is perhaps less total than Goldsmith's is shaping up to be, but mere eccentricity does not seem a sufficient explanation. Taken together, their careers have shown all to be astute, and (where necessary) ruthless. They are not creatures of whim.

Of course, there is nothing new in the marriage of capitalism and

philanthropy. The Victorians were familiar with it. The "chocolate philanthropists", the Cadburys and the Rowntrees, were hugely influential in their time. Many good and progressive causes, including green ones, benefit even today from the support of the Rowntree Trusts. Mrs Thatcher's government has often cited their work as an exemplar of a way forward that alleviates the claims on an overburdened state. With greenery (according to the Princess Royal in a speech earlier this month) increasingly siphoning funds from other charitable purposes, there is every reason why it will attract its share from such trusts.

Goldsmith is special in that he is openly giving up all commerce for his new cause. He has come

round to believing that saving the rainforest and stopping global warming is more important than making more money; and his considerable fortune will make him a powerful actor on the scene.

The motivation, of course, may be as much psychological as intellectual. Within many entrepreneurial hearts, a tension exists between the frenetic day-to-day activity and a yearning to create and build something that will last. The store of optimism on which the successful capitalist depends runs down. The day to meet one's maker approaches. The worldly pleasures that wealth brings begin to pall. This can give rise to Ozymandian tendencies, and Sir James's huge environmental reserve in Mexico, devoted to organic farming and the collection

of rare animals, can be regarded as an attempt to leave a monument that time will not wither.

To understand all is to forgive all, and only a sour spirit will fail to respond, at any rate in part, to Goldsmith's endeavour. Other rich, and lesser, men retire to much more damaging activities. In the scale of virtue, saving rainforests beats driving powerboats or swilling champagne with modcs in an effort to recapture one's vanished youth. The money is his, made fairly according to the rules of the game. If he chooses to spend it in this way, why not?

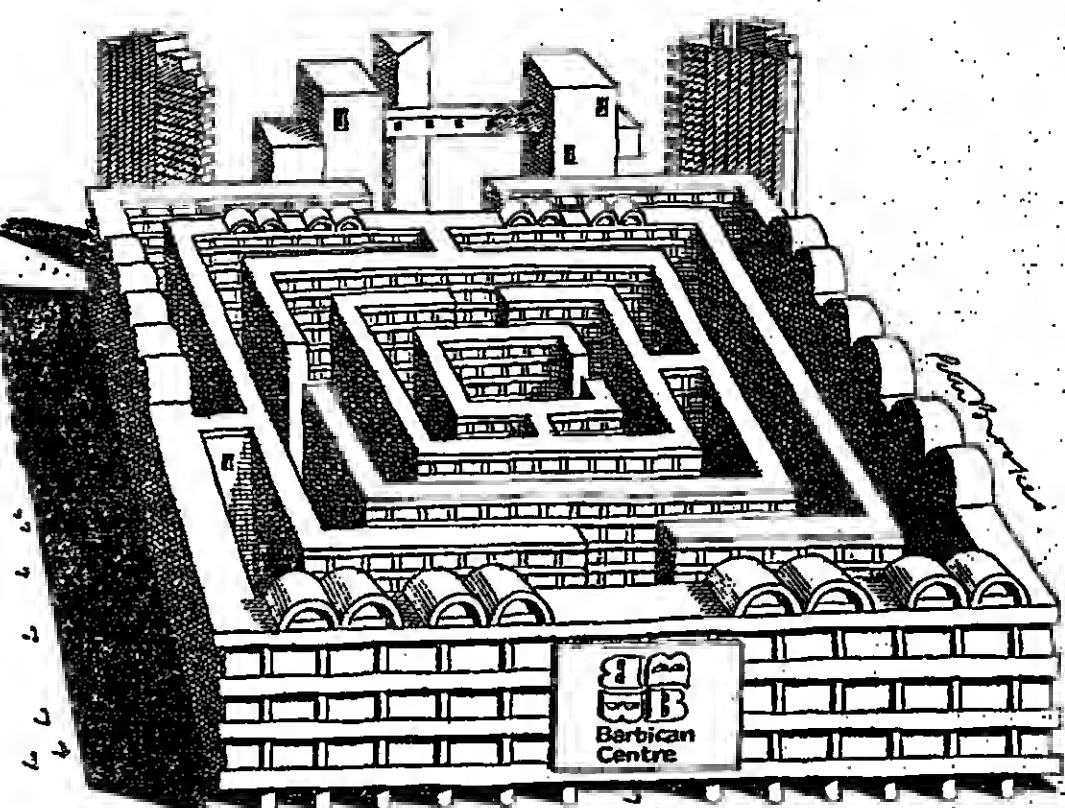
At the same time, it is to be hoped that Goldsmith's career reorientation will not be followed by all of his ilk. The arguments that once defeated the zero growth merchants retain their force. The successes of Britain in the Eighties and the future successes of Eastern Europe in the Nineties, depend on the cultivation of the entrepreneurial spirit. If the entire world retreats into the larger as 'Goldsmith is doing, then poverty, unemployment, a degradation of social services and, yes, ultimately of the environment, will be the inevitable result.

Not everyone has the best part of a billion pounds to cushion a new-found unworlidity.

David Lipsey

There's no point in knocking: just bring the house down

Bernard Levin believes plans to make the Barbican more accessible should be scrapped and a fresh start ordered



Many years ago Sir Thomas Beecham was conducting an orchestral rehearsal in the Albert Hall when a gang of builders, engaged to do some substantial repairs to the fabric of another part of the hall, and knowing nothing of what was going on in the auditorium, opened up with a chorus of pneumatic drills. As the music petered out in the face of such competition, the maestro put down his baton and said: "Thank God, gentlemen, they are pulling the bloody place down at last."

They were not and in time we all grew to love the monstrous thing, particularly when the Festival Hall was built and we no longer had to go there except for the Proms. But one has come to love the Barbican Centre, and no one ever will or could, and my heart leap in joy the other day when a too-hastily read headline suggested that they were pulling that bloody place down at last.

They are not, alas; they are only commissioning a study of this monstrous off-white elephant with the intention — quite hopeless, of course — of redesigning the interior to ensure that customers can find the part of the building they are looking for in less than three-quarters of an hour. I, who have a lack of a sense of direction so extreme that I have difficulty in telling my right hand from my left, have to be taken by the arm and put firmly in my seat, but even stronger men who have traversed the Gobi desert blindfold can be seen weeping with frustration and rage as they go up staircases that lead nowhere but down again, and lifts that deposit a theatre-goer at the library and a concert-seeker at the restaurant.

I should have known. On the night the Queen ceremonially opened the building, I was, and by no means alone, attending to my needs in the gentlemen's lavatory, when Lady Antonia was ushered in by a disorientated and flustered guide. As you would expect of one so self-possessed, she rose handsomely to the occasion: without fainting or even (as far as I could see) blushing, she made an unhurried exit, and we all finished what we were doing and straightened our black ties, not least, perhaps, because we had been sharply reminded of the

ancient rubric, "Please adjust dress before leaving."

The Barbican should sell compasses, and no doubt the survey will advise it to do so. But no amount of tinkering will make this gruesome labyrinth user-friendly. And within the general tragedy, there is a more specific one. The interiors of both the principal auditoriums — the concert-hall and the theatre — are admirable; the sweep of the seating is attractive, the steps are well-measured, the sight-lines excellent, the rows spaced so generously that nobody has to stand up to let others get to their places (do you hear that, Bayreuth?) and the seats comfortable and handsomely upholstered.

Alas, would that the auditoriums were the whole of the building, for they are surrounded by a grim mediocrity that lowers the high spirits the halls induce. For even if you stay in your seat in the interval (and why should you be obliged

to?), you cannot avoid having to pass through the shoddy mess that is the rest of the building, and pass through it at least twice, moreover, coming and going.

It isn't as though the building is physically hopeless, but loved by the performers (such as my dear Wigmore, which is loved by performers and audiences alike, though the frieze at the back of the platform can give you nightmares), the Royal Shakespeare Company unanimously regards the Barbican with a fierce and abiding loathing, and has done so since the doors opened.

The whole place is owned by the City of London, and no one who takes a stroll among the City's most prominent buildings will be surprised at the quality of the Barbican; indeed, the Barbican is much superior to the fruits of the cowardice and laziness that marked the first two post-war architectural generations of the

Square Mile (we are only now seeing creations worthy of the space, such as the Lloyds building), and that make an all too fitting approach to the dismal failure of what should have been a beacon of hope, pleasure and cultural enrichment.

The very doorstep signals the disaster within: newcomers are certain they must have come to the wrong place, for nobody, surely, would seek the entrance of a place of entertainment in a disused coal-mine. Once assured, however, that there is no mistake, they step inside and are faced with a crazy system of "Levels". You and I, not being as clever as the people who devised the system, would think that visitors would at once, logically, go to the ground floor, and thence make their way to whichever floor held what they were looking for. Not so; the crazy paving of which the place is made precludes to sensible an approach,

for it is practically impossible to know which level you are on, such is the way it is planned.

The bewildered visitor therefore looks about to find directions. They are there: to be sure, but they are not only singularly unhelpful, but are made in the limpest and most unattractive lettering imaginable: whoever designed them must have been thinking that the commission was for a very cheap regional airport. As for the decorative devices that are supposed to make the place a thing of beauty, or if not of beauty at least of excitement, Woolworths in its worst days would never have stooped so low or ugly.

And so we come, ten years late, to the realisation that something must be done. The brief for the examiners is "to help people to find their way out of and around the centre, and to locate its key facilities, including the box office, shops and catering." (Shops? Shops? I have been to the Barbican at least 200 times, and the only shop I have ever seen there is the little kiosk that sells play-texts, T-shirts, decorated mugs and the like. Is there, somewhere in its hideous bowels, an arcade of shops that have been concealed from me all this time?)

It won't work. The study will be made, recommendations will be accepted and even acted upon, signposts will be strewn throughout the building — why, it is not entirely impossible that an audibly intelligible public-address system will be installed. But nothing will be done, because nothing can be done, to lift the pall of disappointment that the Barbican offers the moment the threshold is crossed. And when you think of some of the marvellous performances that have been given in the theatre and the concert-hall, the fact that visitors do not feel excitement, happiness and stimulation, but the pall of boredom, is the most damning evidence that a great mistake was made at the beginning, and however much tinkering is done, cannot be rectified.

My advice is to abandon the study and the tinkering alike, carefully preserve the auditoriums, pull the rest of the building down, throw it into the Thames and start again. The Thames will complain, but I can't help that.

Gordievsky's Kremlin ally

One of President Gorbachev's top advisers has told Western human rights campaigners that he is involved in "a tug of war" with the Soviet old guard over his efforts to secure exit visas for the family of KGB defector Oleg Gordievsky, whose story has been serialised in *The Times* this week.

Gordievsky, who now lives in London, has been separated from his wife, Leila, and daughters Marina, ten, and Anya, nine, since he fled from Moscow, fearing for his life, five years ago. Earlier this month, Lord Bethell, former chairman of the European Parliament's human rights sub-committee, wrote to Evdora Burlatsky, chairman of the Supreme Soviet's equivalent body, about the Soviet authorities' refusal to allow the family to leave. Burlatsky, a former speech-writer to Khrushchev and now close to Gorbachev, visited Brussels this week and told MEPs he would do everything in his quite considerable power to help to reunite the family. "This is a tug-of-war between human rights bodies such as my own against the KGB and the ministry of internal affairs," he said.

Burlatsky also hopes to persuade the Soviet government to review the espionage laws and abolish the death penalty for spying. "With the increasing openness of Soviet society," says Bethell, "he thinks there is only one desirable thing left for Westerners to steal — beautiful Russian girls."

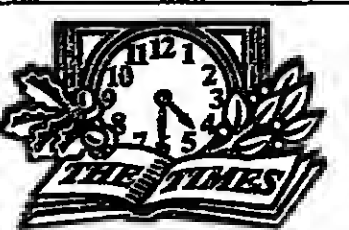
Foreign Office career diplomats could not resist smirking at the discomfiture of Douglas Hurd's chief press officer in the Middle East, Brian Mower, who failed to prevent the leaking of Hurd's alleged remarks about the Palestinian homeland. In Foreign Office eyes, Mower's background at the Treasury and then with Hurd at the Home Office prevents him from ever being "one of us".

Taking the bait

Only a month after Sydney Opera House gave her a glorious retirement send-off, Joan Sutherland is contemplating a sentimental comeback. The Australian-born singer is understood to be considering



one more "final" appearance — in little more than a walk-on role — at Covent Garden in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* on New Year's Eve. The production will be conducted by her husband, Richard Bonynge, and families should



DIARY

Of course try to see the New Year in together. Rumour has it that Bonynge is thinking about his wife's encore already: "I could have danced all night" from *My Fair Lady* is the current favourite. "It is a Viennese tradition to have a surprise guest in Prince Orlovsky's party scene on New Year's Eve," says a spokesman. "We are talking to Dame Joan, but we are unlikely to be able to announce anything until the last minute. After all, a surprise is meant to be just that."

Waspish

Talking to Booker Prize winner A.S. Byatt can be a dangerous pastime. Before you know it, there you are in her next novel, as well-known journalists whose names litter the pages of *Possession* have discovered. Among them is Nicholas Wapshott, political editor of *The Observer*, who lent his name to Mrs Wapshott, one of the least sympathetic characters in the novel. "We had a huge argument about 15 years ago and then didn't

speak to each other," says Byatt. "We were reintroduced at a party earlier this year and discovered that our argument had all been based on a misunderstanding, that we actually agreed."

And how was Byatt celebrating her award yesterday? "A taxi is waiting outside to take me to bank the cheque," she told the *Diary*. "Then I am off to University College to talk with my French theorist friends. I need soothing."

Tell him: resign later

Only the swift intervention of the Tory chief whip, Tim Renton, prevented a second parliamentary private secretary resigning on the day that John Major's PPS, Tony Favell, quit the ranks. When government whips heard that David Sumberg, PPS for almost five years to the attorney general, Sir Patrick Mayhew, was about to resign on Tuesday, he was swiftly summoned to Renton's office and asked to think again. However, he is still expected to resign before the next election, to give himself more time to defend his marginal seat.

Favell's colleagues, meanwhile, are highly amused by the untimely appearance of an interview with him this week in *The House Magazine*. "I must be the longest serving PPS here and we get on very well together," says Favell of the man whose employment he was about to quit. He claims he and Major are "very relaxed" together, and says he knows what would embarrass the Chancellor. "If it is something which might embarrass him, I always ask first." Such as whether to resign at such a sensitive time?

Doubling up

Russell's Eurocrat Frederick Sorensen, head of the EC's air transport section, has appealed to airlines to impose a reservation charge to discourage businessmen and other travellers from making multiple bookings which they fail to honour or cancel. The practice, Sorensen believes, is directly responsible for the over-selling, by which bookings are taken for up to 20 per cent more seats than are available. "The business-class ticket system allows passengers to retain the full value of the ticket even if the passenger doesn't show," he says. "It should be changed."

Anyone who has been bounced off a flight for which they have a valid ticket will doubtless agree. A shame, then, that Sorensen, who is now charged with drawing up EC proposals to outlaw the practice, does not appear to be leading by example. For a visit to London last month, Sorensen's office reserved him a seat on a Sabena flight from Brussels, but he flew instead with British Airways, without cancelling his other reservation. "There is nothing in the current airline booking system that prevents this," he says. "It is common practice." Hardly the point, surely.

● The thought of performing the musical *Kismet*, which kicks off with a number called "Beautiful Baghdad" proved too much for the *Crewe Amateur Operatic Society* at such a sensitive time. It has cancelled its forthcoming production. A pity, perhaps, given that the villain is a Saddam-like figure who ends up drowned in his own ornamental pool.

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LEARNING FROM HISTORY

Margaret Thatcher is playing a dangerous game on education. After yesterday's much-publicised meeting with her education secretary, John MacGregor, she should express confidence in him and leave him quietly to bed down her already vast reform programme. There is much scope for Tory radicalism elsewhere. Here is a case for consolidation.

The cause of the latest rumpus is Mrs Thatcher's teasing reference last week to vouchers, beloved of the party's right wing. Vouchers for primary and secondary education are seen as the logical last step in the decentralisation of state education. Schools would "go independent" (but under Whitehall supervision by hook or by crook), with a voucher for parents to take to whatever school they chose. This voucher could vary with income or geography and meet all or only part of the cost of schooling. Since it would have to include the 7 per cent of children in private schools, the system would inevitably cost more.

Ever since the 1960s, with the advent of "progressive" primary education and the steady demise of selective secondary schools, British state education has found itself on the defensive. Apparently falling standards, coupled with rising prosperity, have driven many parents into the private sector. The present government has sought to meet this dissatisfaction by helping parents to opt out. It has established a tier of state-supported schooling partly or totally free of local council control, by means of assisted places at private schools, grant-maintained status for "opted-out" schools and "local management with open enrolment" even within the local council sector. Whatever political cosmetic surrounds these devices, the intention is to offer an escape from a uniform, comprehensive system for the middle class or clever child.

Common sense suggests that, up to a point, the injection of some such competition into part of any public service will probably improve the whole. The same ambition governs Mrs Thatcher's hopes for hospitals. The lack of such competition, coupled with the politicisation of staffing, underlay the demoralisation of much city education in the 1980s. Head teachers' freedom to spend within their budgets, greater flexibility for popular schools to bid for extra resources, the occasional opted-out rival to set an academic pace, have all brought fresh air into a

moribund local structure. Mr MacGregor claims that such reforms have many of the virtues of vouchers without the risk, complication and cost of a free-for-all.

But how much further should such competition go? Education is not just another marketplace service industry and ministers will commit electoral suicide if they suppose otherwise. Public education is a central civic function, its structure a mirror of the community round it. Mrs Thatcher's enthusiasm for vouchers is built, not just on her admirable love of choice, but on her aversion to local government. A new school system which enticed, say, over a third of parents in the more prosperous districts out of council schools and into quasi-independent ones would create social and educational apartheid. While the remaining council "sink" schools could be given extra money — though for how long? — there would be discontinuity and waste as parents chased teachers and fashions from one school to another. As the education director for Hammersmith and Fulham says in a letter today, this is threatened even now.

The state-maintained schools would suffer a different but no less inhibiting fate, drawn into the embrace of Whitehall. This government has shown its love of educational centralism in its curricular dirigisme. Mrs Thatcher has rightly berated her education ministers for this, but she goaded them into it. The belief that a centrally financed national school system would somehow be more independent, say in staffing or building, than one financed locally is a fantasy: look what Whitehall has done with the prisons and hospitals.

Throughout most of the democratic world, the best state schools are local schools, locally financed, locally supported, locally patronised. The government is right to permit an independent sector to keep the public sector on its toes, though why it should subsidise that sector is a mystery. But the crucial task of government is to promote, within the local authority sector, a sensible balance between efficient school management and the fair allocation of resources. It is no good pretending, as some Tories still do, that all parents can always have the state school of their choice, and making this a code for "all middle-class parents" is a dangerous deceit. In 1964, the Tories were tarred as the party of educational segregation and were thrown out of office.

LET THEM SELL CAKE

The Soviet Union can no longer afford socialism, but capitalism clearly costs too much. That is the core of President Mikhail Gorbachev's economic plan, published on Tuesday and instantly denounced by his rival, Boris Yeltsin. The president is trying to please both the party and the republics by introducing the free market without abolishing the apparatus of central planning. His decision will not end an intellectual and political argument which has lasted too long.

The Soviet Union has been here before. Lenin tried to compromise between socialism and the market in his New Economic Policy. His premature death left the field open to Stalin's own cure for the country's ills, which appealed to those in the West who emphasised "modernisation" above all else.

Mr Gorbachev has calculated that, by leaving the machinery of control intact, he can neutralise what would otherwise constitute a formidable faction of disgruntled hereditary bureaucrats. Thus the prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, and his cronies are now ludicrously charged with ensuring the success of a programme against which they have fought a long public war of attrition.

Mr Gorbachev's own position, at the apex of the Soviet *nomenklatura*, may not yet be strong enough to dispense with the political buttressing of the Moscow ministries. Though the Ukrainian premier was forced by popular protests to resign yesterday — shades of Poland and East Germany last year — Mr Gorbachev himself is not about to relinquish the field. But the Soviet president has not been persuaded of his own indispensability merely by the flattery of prime ministers or academics. He believes that if the Soviet state is to survive the coming winter, there must be one source of economic authority, able to override the republics. President Gorbachev hopes to appear as a *de Gaulle*, silencing the parliamentary cacophony. Aware that they might be walking into a trap, Mr Yeltsin and the Russian democrats appear

to have decided to defer unilateral action and watch the Soviet juggernaut seize up in the arctic twilight of communism. The legal status of private property will not be enshrined above a state which has always had confiscatory tendencies. The reservoir of paper roubles will not be drained. Privatisation will apparently follow neither the western models for selling state assets, already adopted in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, nor the alternative strategy of free distribution.

Nor has the Soviet government any plans to nurture the new commercial class which even the most rudimentary market economy needs, on which the rule of law and democratic institutions depend. That class, though small and vulnerable, was palpably present in central Europe long before 1989. In the Soviet Union it is only just emerging.

Mr Gorbachev and the Soviet state will, it seems, be left to incur the wrath of the people. A record grain harvest last summer, despite colossal waste, means that nobody (in the cities, at least) is likely to starve this winter. On the other hand, the retreat from central Europe, the weakening of the military-industrial nexus, and above all the presence of Mr Yeltsin, could combine to precipitate a political collapse. Economic decrepitude cannot of itself bring down an established power structure — however extreme Ceausescu's impoverishment of Romania, there had to be a coup to bring him down — but it has already provided Mr Gorbachev's democratic opponents with the propaganda weapons they need.

Mr Gorbachev has always triumphed by extemporisation, never by the cogency or candour of his policies. His decision to eschew consistency in economics is quite in character. It is also a calamity for the Russian people. Unless their patience is unlimited, it looks as though Mr Gorbachev may for once have miscalculated. His plan does not deserve western financial support.

THE HURD MENTALITY

Dogged though his visit to Israel has been by accidents and gaffes, Douglas Hurd cannot entirely blame the black farce on the relentless operation of Murphy's law. The truly avoidable error was the trip itself.

Since Iraq invaded Kuwait, Mr Hurd has made the most of the somewhat mysterious esteem in which Britain continues to be held by Arab governments. His visits to the Gulf states and Egypt have helped to strengthen the anti-Iraq coalition. His decision last month to include Israel in these peregrinations was a reckless concession to the Foreign Office's claim to a "role" in the Palestine dispute.

With or without the killings in Jerusalem, which took place after the visit had been fixed, no worse time could have been chosen. Visits by a British foreign secretary are as rare as they have been dogged by misfortune: Lord Carrington was there when Argentina invaded the Falklands in 1982. Even if Britain had influence in Israel, the visit could only give prominence to the Arab-Israeli conflict just when any linkage with the Kuwait invasion was least desirable. Since Britain has almost no influence, what compensating benefit could Mr Hurd have hoped to derive?

The damage began even before he departed, with a speech that blurred the clarity of Britain's policy on the Gulf by criticising Israel's "misguided" policies in the occupied territories, urging it to seize the chance for a settlement which, he believed, would be created by Iraq's defeat and pouring sympathy on the Palestinians. Mr Hurd is too experienced to have expected his denial that this constituted "linkage" to be taken seriously.

The first warning followed: the Israeli government advised the cancellation, on "security" grounds, of his plans to open a British Council centre in the Gaza Strip. Nothing daunted, Mr Hurd set off, buoyed by the prospect of a lunch with Palestinian leaders and promising to talk tough to the Israelis who, he said confidently, "don't like people who are meaty-mouthed". Once there, his diplomatic training naturally reasserted itself. He set out to please everybody, with predictable results.

Neither side has ever been further from the "mean compromise" in which diplomacy's truth ever lies. The Israeli government cold-shouldered his suggestion that Israel reject the UN Security Council resolution and co-operate with the investigators dispatched under that resolution. Could Mr Hurd have expected otherwise? Next it was the Palestinians' turn to be outraged. The foreign secretary may well have been misquoted as saying that Britain was "opposed" to a Palestinian state, when all he did was repeat the familiar British position that Palestinians should be able to decide their own future. But then anything short of unequivocal support for such a state was unlikely to dispel Palestinian suspicions.

For a British foreign secretary to be bizarrely denounced as both pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli inside 24 hours shows the danger of such exercises in futile interventionism. That Britain was once involved in the politics of the Levant confers on the Foreign Office, or the British government, no continuing responsibility for resolving its conflicts. Mr Hurd is not the first minister to succumb to an overdose of history. May he be the last.

Opting out of primary schools

From the Director of Education, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Sir, The Government's stated policy is that local education authorities should be reducing the number of places in primary schools in line with the falling school population.

Hammersmith and Fulham has existed as an education authority for only six months. We inherited a situation of vast over-provision of primary school places compared with the number of children of primary school age in the borough.

With the support and, indeed, at the behest of the Department of Education, we undertook an early review of primary provision with the stated aim of closing and amalgamating schools. We undertook a thorough consultative exercise, endeavouring to obtain consensus around agreed educational criteria which should be used to make decisions on closure. These criteria relate to the National Curriculum and local

management of schools and have commanded widespread support. However, it is too much to expect individual schools to happily acquiesce in their own closure.

By seeking to extend the possibility of opting out to primary schools (report, October 11) Mr MacGregor has driven a coach and horses through our, or any other LEA's ability to exercise its legal responsibility for planning primary provision properly. This would make it impossible for local authorities not just to implement their own policies, but to implement one of the major policies of the Government in relation to reducing surplus places.

I hope we do not get the blame when we are unable to carry out those responsibilities effectively.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTINE WHATFORD,
Director of Education,
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham,
Ground Floor, Banda House,
Cambridge Grove, W6,
October 12.

Education vouchers

From Mr David Martin, MP for Portsmouth South (Conservative)

Sir, Ronald Butt's strictures (October 15) on the lack of a coherent Conservative theme for future domestic policy included scolding education vouchers, while urging the Government "to address the fundamental question of how to create a fully independently managed and centrally state-funded school system freed from local authority and teachers' politics".

That is precisely what supporters of education vouchers see as the central objective. Instead of begging the question, can we have Mr Butt's better alternative to achieve it?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MARTIN,
House of Commons,
October 15.

From the Headmaster of the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

Sir, I am at a loss to understand why education vouchers are back on the Government's education agenda. It cannot be to support independent schools. After all, the independent sector is said to be booming, scarcely surprisingly in

view of the assisted places scheme. Local financial management is surely a very good way, in due course, of raising standards. Better still, of course, is grant-maintained status, a path I recommend wholeheartedly.

Yours faithfully,
A. S. J. PELLEGRINI,
Headmaster,
The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School,
89 Addison Road, W14,
October 16.

From Mr Robert Chambers

Sir, Stuart MacLure ("Giving vouchers a sure start in life", October 16) argues cogently for the "sure fire winner" of nursery school vouchers and rightly points out on the way that a full educational voucher scheme is now feasible and possibly cost effective.

What he does not point out is that it would require no extra legislation from central Government if a go-ahead local authority was to choose to make educational arrangements, either nursery or all education, on this basis.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT CHAMBERS,
(Assistant Director),
The Freedom Association,
35 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1,
October 16.

Relief agencies

From Sir Noel Moynihan

Sir, Nicholas Hinton is the Director-General of the Save the Children Fund, an organisation which continually and rightly stresses the continuity of its work in many countries, here and overseas as against the "one-off" emergency work occasionally undertaken with the five members of the Disaster Emergency Committee. It was therefore surprising to find him applying such contrary reasoning to the "40 associated agencies" of the United Nations ("Wanted: a UN book-keeping force", October 9).

Those of us who have seen, over the past 30 years or more, the over-eating work of UNDP, Unesco, UNHCR, WHO and many other UN agencies in such

countries as Afghanistan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Iran, Turkey and countless others can never doubt the great humanitarian advantages brought to them wherever the assistance is given.

Mr Hinton is right to draw new attention to the bureaucratic processes in the UN apparatus but his suggested solution to the climbing of the cumbersome Olympus he describes is totally impracticable, however necessary. If governments cannot control the UN and the UN is incapable of policing itself, it will not suffer an international non-governmental unit to do so.

Yours etc.,
NOEL MOYNIHAN,
Herstmonceux Place,
Flowers Green,
Near Hailsham, East Sussex,
October 12.

Directory enquiries

From Prebendary John C. de la T. Davies

Sir, There are two classes of directory enquiries for which it would be unfair of British Telecom to make any charge (report, October 11). There should be no charge for answering an enquiry for a new number not yet in the directory. How else can we discover them?

There should be no charge for answering an enquiry for a number on an exchange within one's local area, if the exchange and its numbers are not included in one's own directory.

For instance, there are 14 exchanges excluded from our directory but in our local area, among them such useful places as Aberavenny and Moomouth, and, believe it or not, Longtown Castle, which is part of our south Herefordshire district and our rural deanery of Abbeydore; io-

deed our rural dean lives at Longtown near its castle!

Yours sincerely,
JOHN C. de la T. DAVIES,
Peterchurch Rectory,
Hereford,
October 11.

From Mr Richard Masters

Sir, British Telecom's decision to charge for calls to directory enquiries would be less objectionable to people in towns like this, situated on the edge of one of its arbitrary areas, if the directories provided free were more appropriate to our needs.

Our "local" directories (ordinary and Yellow Pages) contain the names of subscribers 30 miles to the north or the other side of Bristol but not some of those on our own exchange who live in villages two miles to the south.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD MASTERS,
14 Wick Hollow,
Glastonbury, Somerset.

Planning gain

From Mrs A. J. Carlyon

Sir, I see planning gain (letters, September 10, 20, 28) as a temptation to the hard-pressed elected members of a district planning committee to agree to a planning application because they know that the need is there and that there is no other way of funding the project without the developers' financial assistance.

We in Cornwall are suffering from exactly the same disease as Oxford (September 28), namely over-development. Our infrastructure is fragile and is stretched

to the limit, but still the developers press on in the name of progress. Planning applications are heard and refused, appeals protracted but eventually dismissed by the Department of the Environment, but within months the same application is before the planning committee for consideration yet again. Is this really democracy?

Yours faithfully,
ARMOREL J. CARLYON
(Chairman, Carrick branch,
Council for the Protection of
Rural England),
3 Strangways Villas,
Truro, Cornwall.

On the wrong lines

From Mr Scott McIntosh

Sir, Matthew Parris's column on trains (October 6) was amusing, but was wide of the mark in his understanding of modern tramway (or light railway) systems.

The Blackpool system is of course now rather outdated, but nevertheless it is still a fine example of how electric traction can move large crowds faster and with less damage to the environment than can any motor system. Modern trams can carry over 20,000 passengers an hour in each direction on twin tracks; to carry the same number in private cars would require ten lanes in each direction.

Among the "nine things" Mr Parris clearly did not know about light railways, also include the facts that "one short circuit" does not halt tram or train systems; that modern trams can run up to 50 mph, with better acceleration than road vehicles because of the smooth ride of railed vehicles; that noise measurements in France and the Netherlands show the noise emitted by a bus to be twice as great as that from a modern tram; and that accidents per passenger mile on European tram-

way systems are significantly lower than on the corresponding bus systems.

Modern materials allow overhead wiring to be light and inconspicuous; one of my colleagues was once wrongly accused of having it "touched out" of photographs he was displaying at a public meeting. And finally, trams do not pollute the towns they run in — power stations may pollute but technology exists to remove almost all the pollutants.

Yours faithfully,
SCOTT MCINTOSH (Light Rail
Development Planner,
London Transport,
55 Broadway, SW1,
October 12.

Price of books at authors' cost?

From Mr Martin Short

Sir, As an author whose last book rose to third in the non-fiction best-seller lists, I welcome Dillon's defiance (report, October 15) of the net book agreement. What infuriates me is the power of another chain of bookshops to secure a vast profit at my expense. Studying my latest six-monthly returns I was shocked to see that on 18,227 paperback sales (half the total), my 7½ per cent royalty had been calculated not on the cover price of £4.99 but on £2.41. This reduced my royalties from £6,821 to £3,294, or 18p a copy. When I asked why, I was told that one chain now has so much market clout that it had squeezed a discount of over 50 per cent out of my publisher. This gave my publisher the contractual right to pay me only on the discounted price, yet the chain was selling my book for the full £4.99.

Terry Maher, of Dillons, is slashing prices at no cost to authors, even though his discount is far less than that commanded by his biggest competitor, which still expects the public to pay top whack.

Having taken 18 months to research and write my latest book, I am depressed by the fact that, whatever its sales, my profit will be almost nothing. It seems the only way even a best-selling writer may survive in future is to buy copies of his or her own book at author's discount and sell them by mail order from home.

Yours indebtedly,
MARTIN SHORT,
10 Stuckey Place, NW1,
October 16.

From Mr Ian Clark

Sir, I fear that you have allowed slick publicity to sway your objectivity (leading article, October 15). If the net book agreement were to be abolished it is true that some book prices would fall, but only the best sellers. American experience has demonstrated that, outside the "top 30", average book prices have actually risen since the early 1980s, when discounting began there.

Resolution 242

From the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews

Sir, Professor Harold Lydall (October 13) refers to the United Nations Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967. The key words in that resolution are "emphasising the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war..."

Mr George Brown, Foreign Secretary at the time, writing to the then President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, interpreted Resolution 242 and stated that it did not impose any requirement upon Israel to withdraw from any territory in advance of a permanent settlement for peace.

I drew this correspondence to the attention of Mr William Waldegrave, MP, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in March, 1989. I subsequently received a letter from his office, confirming that her Majesty's Government fully accepts and stands by that interpretation of Resolution 242.

Yours etc.,
LIONEL KOPELOWITZ,
President,
The Board of Deputies of British Jews,
Woburn House,
Tavistock Square, WC1,
October 15.

From Mr Steven H. Fruhman

Sir, Resolution 242 calls for Israel to withdraw from territories (not

Nor is it necessarily true that lower book prices lead to increased book sales. Most studies have shown that the book market is relatively inelastic. General economic conditions and consumer confidence have a much greater bearing on book sales than unit prices. How else do you explain the volume increase in books sold in the UK during the 1980s, when book prices also rose much faster than general inflation?

During the 1980s American books have been much more expensive than their English equivalents, one reason why our publishers have enjoyed a buoyant export trade. The temporary weakness of the dollar may have changed the situation for a few titles, but most American backlist titles are still more expensive over there.

If you are really so keen to see American discounting over here, are you willing to accept the wholesale (rather than retail) price maintenance that is statutorily enforced over there? Our publishers could then only grant quantity discounts to booksellers that could be economically justified in a court of law as resulting from proven cost savings. The large overriding discounts demanded by our major chains would be swept away. Our smaller booksellers would enjoy competing on such terms — all they ask for is fair competition on a level playing field.

The opponents of the current agreement have twice recently failed to convince the Office of Fair Trading that there is sufficient evidence to take to the restrictive practices court, where the NBA must be judged. The supporters of the agreement — a significant majority of both publishers and booksellers — do have some powerful arguments on their side.

Yours sincerely,
IAN CLARK,
4 The Crest,
Surrey,
October 16.

"the territories" as stated by Professor Lydall) occupied in 1967. The omission of the definite article, which was not accidental, was intended to make clear that a complete Israeli withdrawal was not contemplated.

It also calls — this is scarcely ever mentioned — for

termination of all claims of states of belligerency, respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

Contrary to Professor Lydall's new, non-implementation owes everything to the fact that, with the exception of Egypt, no Arab State has either recognised Israel, terminated its claims of state of belligerency, or recognised Israel's political independence or territorial integrity, within secure boundaries or otherwise.

Professor Lydall is not, however, alone in his error — Mr Hurd told Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight* last Thursday that 242 required Israel to withdraw from "the occupied territories". If academics and politicians get the facts right they will be better placed to reach sustainable conclusions.

Yours faithfully,
STEVEN H. FRUHMANN,
The Glen,
34 New Hall Road,
Manchester 7,
October 15.

Hospital security

From Mr Colin Goodhind

Sir, I was instrumental last year in establishing a security management system to control movement throughout a Portsmouth hospital, mainly during the hours of darkness. Just under 4,000 staff wear identity badges, many doubling as access cards for authorised personnel, allowing them into predetermined areas.

The system has resulted in a general atmosphere of security awareness from which staff and patients benefit.

In my opinion this would have gone a long way towards preventing the recent assault on a young girl in a Carshalton hospital (reports October 15, 16) and should be considered before elaborate closed-circuit TV systems, manned guarding and all the other methods susceptible to human failing.

Yours sincerely,
COLIN GOODHIND,
Longford House,
1 Longford Road,
Melksham, Wiltshire,
October 16.

Harking back

From Mr Russell Chamberlin

Sir, To describe Melina Mercouri as "the Greek actress turned socialist politician" (report, October 16) is a bit like describing Margaret Thatcher as "the English chemist turned prime minister".

Melina Mercouri's heyday as actress was some little while ago. Her socialist loyalty is a continuance. And while, in Britain, many may have bristled over her espousal of the Elgin Marbles, would that we, too, Sir, had somebody, as in your report (earlier editions), with the determination "to restore pride to the capital's cultural heritage".

Yours etc.,
RUSSELL CHAMBERLIN,
3 Harvey Gardens, Addison Road,
Guildford, Surrey,
October 16.

Turning a phrase

From Dr Angelo Paterson

Sir, It can be amusing to compare metaphorical equivalents in different cultures, as does your correspondent Mary Booth (October 13), but occasionally one language does seem to have the edge on another in capturing our experience. Thus after a downpour I am often tempted to borrow from the French and describe myself with more satisfying emphasis as soaked, not to the skin, but to the bones.

Yours faithfully,
ANGELA PATERSON,
215 Boroughbridge Road, York,
October 14.

From Mrs R. Smallwood

Sir, In Italy we "know our chickens" while in England, I am told, you "know your onions".

Yours faithfully,
ROSANNA SMALLWOOD,
Studio Cottage, Tarlton,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire,
October 13.

HEALTH

MEDICAL BRIEFING Dr Thomas Stuttford

Is TB coming back?

A visit to Haworth, and a glance through the diary written by the father of the Brontë sisters, shows that it was not only the girls and Branwell who disturbed the nights in the personage with their coughing. The Rev Patrick Brontë suffered from chronic bronchitis, and he was greatly troubled by his cough. In the days when tuberculosis was rife, the Haworth scenario was common: the vulnerable children developed obvious TB, while their grandmother or grandfather, whose immune state had come to terms with the infection, coughed away, spreading the bacillus around the family, although they themselves suffered little more

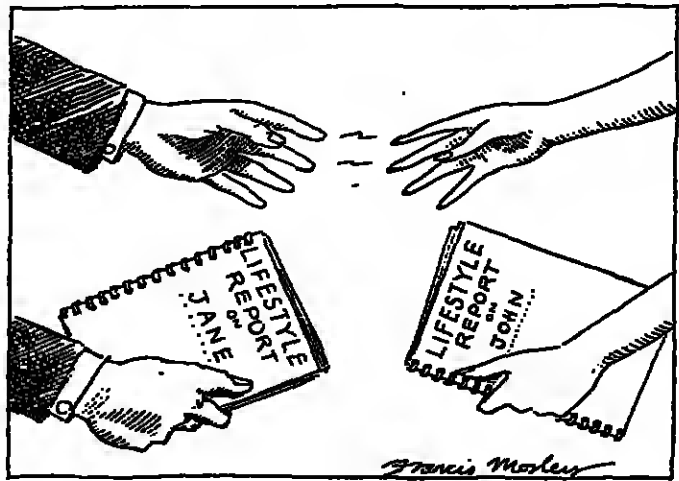
than inconvenience from the disease. Aids may change the traditional picture, for no longer will it be elderly grandparents who infect the family but the raffish Uncle George who, in the words of Sir Donald Acheson, the chief medical officer, has

been sleeping with people he did not know. Aids reduces the body's immune response to a wide variety of conditions, so that infections and cancers which had previously been so rare that they were confronted only in the pages of textbooks have now become comparatively commonplace.

Aids patients are vulnerable to TB, and in consequence the disease may make a comeback in Britain just as it has, according to reports from the World Health Organisation this week, in many overseas countries. But, as yet, Aids is still not sufficiently common for this complication to have affected British statistics: the number of notifications of TB for the last quarter available shows little change from those notified in the same quarter in the previous year.

The spread of Aids in the heterosexual community is, as predicted, increasing, and is following the expected pattern, albeit at a slower rate than forecast.

So Sir Donald's advice was sound, even if quaintly reported; for whereas a formal introduction and a long courtship are unimportant, a knowledge not only of a potential sexual partner's own lifestyle, but also of the habits of the social groups in which he or she has moved, may be life-saving.



Beethoven's eighth

The theory that Beethoven died from sarcoidosis is an ingenious one which can never be disproved; but it is known that his signs, symptoms and eventual mode of death were not those commonly associated with this strange disease.

Press reports following the publication of Dr Tom Falferman's treatise on Beethoven's health must have made gloomy reading for the 2,200 British patients who are newly diagnosed each year as having sarcoid; they should take heart, for they are almost as likely to write a symphony as to die from liver disease or go deaf.

Although sarcoid involves the liver in 70 per cent of patients, this infiltration can usually be demonstrated only by liver biopsy; symptoms from it are rare, and do not figure in the list of the six main reasons why the disease is first diagnosed. Experts agree that only a few cases of sarcoid develop chronic liver failure, and that death from liver disease in sarcoidosis is even rarer.

In Britain only 1 per cent of patients with sarcoid have involvement of the central nervous system, and even when it does strike the cranial nerves, it is much more usual for the facial nerve to be damaged, causing a drooping, paralysed face, or the optic nerve, with loss of vision, rather than the eighth auditory nerve. If Beethoven had been one of the unlucky few with nerve damage, he is much more likely to have gone blind than deaf, particularly as sarcoidosis also frequently causes an inflammatory eye condition (uveitis). Syphilis, however, which Beethoven is reputed to have had, has a predilection for attacking the eighth nerve, and hearing loss is common.

The cause of sarcoid is unknown; it produces changes, granulomas, similar to those caused by TB, and like TB can attack practically any part of the body, but it is not infectious. The theory that an allergy might be the cause enjoys periodic support, but has never been proved, and it seems probable that sarcoid can be provoked by a variety of different agents.

The disease, which usually starts with joint pains, unexplained fever and erythema nodosum (a skin rash), later usually attacks the lungs and the glands near them. Respiratory

problems are the usual reason for any disabilities, and death when it does occur is usually either from respiratory failure, or heart failure secondary to lung disease. A third of patients make a complete recovery, a third are left with minor residual damage, a third need long-term treatment, and in only well under 5 per cent does sarcoid contribute to a patient's death.

It still seems probable that Beethoven had syphilis and died from chronic cirrhosis secondary to alcoholism, a dual pathology which would account for all his symptoms.

Too much of a good thing

Geography classes are enlivened by stories of the fate which befell explorers who ate polar bear or seal liver. These livers are so packed with vitamin A that the heartless explorers paid for their carnage by developing acute hypervitaminosis: they became sleepy and lethargic, possibly fatal complications in the Arctic cold, and also suffered from chronic headaches and vomiting; later, their skin peeled. Similar but less dramatic signs and symptoms affected children whose parents, anxious to see that nothing was spared in giving them a good start in life, overdid the cod liver oil and vitamin pills. The average capsule contains 4,000 international units, and as overdosage is usually regarded as over 100,000 international units a day for adults, 20,000 a day for children, it is not easily achieved; when it is, however, the victim develops dry skin and sparse hair as well as vague joint pains, headaches and a general lassitude. Occasionally the liver is affected, but in nearly all cases recovery is swift and complete

once the vitamin A is discontinued. More recently it has been shown that overdosage with vitamin A causes occasional foetal abnormalities, and the most recent suggestion is that it may not only be the polar bear and seal liver which contains potentially dangerous levels of vitamin A, but that a vulnerable unborn child might also be affected by the much smaller quantities of vitamin A present in liver bought at the butcher's. Changes in vitamin A levels in butcher's liver are thought to be related to the high quantities of the vitamin present in some animal feeds; the livers of all animals concentrate and store vitamin A.

Vitamin A in reasonable quantities is not only good for women when pregnant, but an essential part of their diet. It seems highly improbable that any woman is going to give birth to a deformed child because she chose liver pâté rather than potted shrimps as an *hors-d'oeuvre*, or had calves' liver as the main course, but she should perhaps avoid eating large quantities of liver until research workers have decided whether there is any substance in this latest scare.

If business is personal

Companies are calling on outside agencies to solve their staff's personal problems.

Liz Gill reports

Rani Bains, a clinical psychologist, has consulting rooms in a Nash crescent overlooking Regent's Park, in London. There, amid the potted plants, clients get the benefit of her professional expertise at her company's expense. It seems a long way from the days when a good cry in the ladies or a cup of tea in the canteen were the nearest most businesses got to personal counselling.

Confidential help for emotional and psychological problems is increasingly a measure of company concern, and those who offer it see it as a logical progression from traditional occupational health. Bill Edge, the personnel manager of ICL's logistics operations in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, says: "It's the last piece of the jigsaw. We believe you should look after people as a whole, their mental and emotional as well as physical well-being."

The company has just set up an employee assistance programme offering its 1,500 staff in Stevenage, and their families, confidential advice on anything from drug abuse to domestic disputes.

"We have adopted an arm's-length approach," Mr Edge says. "We advertise the service and that's it. That is why we wrote to people at home. We wanted it to be an individual, rather than a heavy corporate thing."

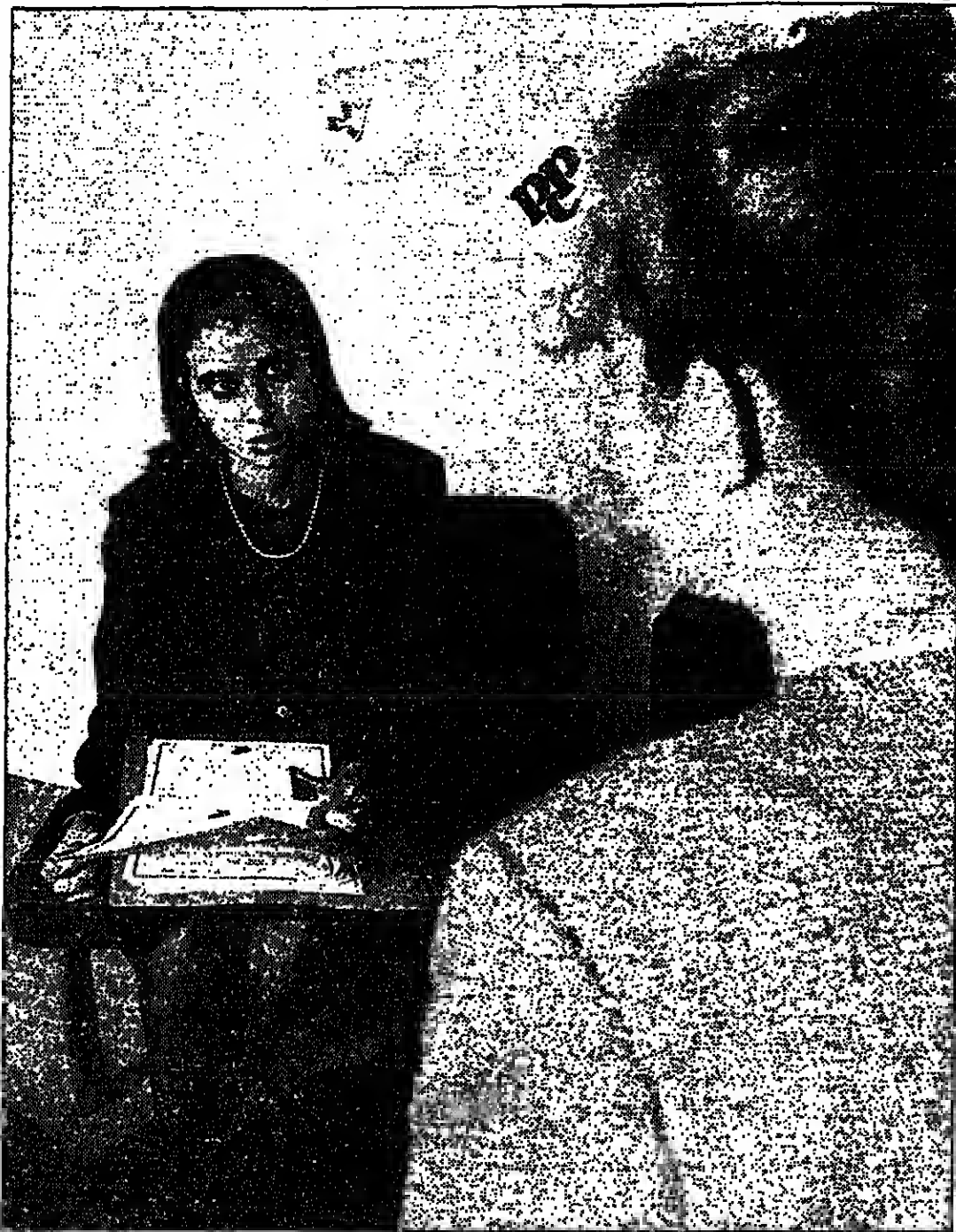
A key element in the programme is that it is run by an outside agency, Personal Performance Consultants UK (PPC), which has about 20 similar schemes in Britain, covering between 10,000 and 15,000 employees in companies including oil, banking and computers. The annual cost is about £30 per worker. "The basic concept is that the organisation buys our service as a welfare benefit. It is off-site, free to the employee, and confidential," says Alistair Anderson, the managing consultant with PPC. "I think we are far more conscious nowadays that you have to look after your staff."

"Some companies have set up in-house counselling but often it is not very popular. It is naive to think people will go if they have to walk past the managing director's office to a door marked, in effect, 'problems solved here'."

PPC has a network of 80 counsellors, usually clinical psychologists, psychiatric registrars or social workers to whom clients can be sent after an initial telephone interview.

They are supervised and all follow the same approach, which is, Mr Anderson says, essentially one of problem-solving rather than psycho-analytical or behavioural.

In the United States, where assistance programmes have flourished for 20 years, the average take-up rate by employees has been about 8 per cent. Marital or domestic difficulties account for 40 per cent of referrals, drug or alcohol abuse for 10 per cent and psychological conditions, such as



A sympathetic ear: but Rani Bains would never suggest a troubled employee should resign.

depression or anxiety, for a further 10 per cent. The rest cover a wide range of legal, financial, career.

Although PPC has been established for only two years, the figures compiled in Britain so far show a similar trend. Clients come from the boardroom as well as the shop floor and are as likely to be male as female.

Companies are not told the names of employees using the service, but they are given quarterly reports on the numbers and the type of problems. McDonnell Douglas, the American aviation company, estimated that, over a four-year period, reduced absenteeism and better productivity resulted in a saving of \$4 for every dollar spent on counselling.

ICL, which is running its programme as a one-year pilot study, also anticipates an improvement in efficiency. Mr Edge says: "We hope there will be a measurable increase in morale. Some problems take staff away from their work mentally, if not physically."

A counselling service can also be a management tool, because an employee whose performance is seriously below par can be referred for help. More than 95 per cent of cases, however, are self-referrals. According to Ms Bains, a PPC counsellor, they are often the most confidential help with personal problems. They also have a wide

range of contacts outside the company to help deal with specific needs. He says, however, that smaller companies may not have the resources or the time for in-house counselling. "The other advantage of an outside agency is that it is seen to be independent of the company. There is always a suggestion that an in-house department will be partial, even though that is not the case."

One of the main difficulties faced by counsellors is that many personal problems are a result of working conditions; and what counselling service, paid for by a company, is going to tell staff to work less hard, or insist on extra manpower to ease the workload?

Mr Anderson says that counselling services do, in fact, give companies feedback. "You wouldn't get to first base telling a company it had to take on another 300 staff - but you can point out, for example, that you are getting an inappropriate number of referrals from one department and they can put two and two together."

Ms Bains says she would never tell anyone to leave their job. "The individual must make the choice. But we can facilitate understanding and teach coping strategies so that people can control their workload or feel more confident in dealing with their boss."

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When truth is the highest premium

Insurance companies insist on a medical before customers take out a life policy. But what do you do when they then 'load' your premium - and refuse to say why you are a health risk?

ON THE whole, I trust doctors. And on the whole, I trust big insurance companies. But that trust can be misplaced.

The last time I had to get a new life insurance policy (to get a bigger mortgage), I was given a medical by a doctor I had never met before. He produced a report, which I was not allowed to see.

I was subsequently informed by my broker that I had been "loaded" because of something in my medical report. Momentarily worried, I rang the insurance company, Sun Alliance. Why had it rated me an above-average risk? Sun Alliance would not tell me. If I had any enquiries about my health, I should ask my GP. She could not enlighten me.

Was it because I had asthma? Was it because I had an irritable bowel? Or was it because I had confessed to drinking the equivalent of a bottle of wine a day?

Or was it something else? It did not bear thinking about, so I forgot it until recently, when my wife and I decided that I ought to take out some sort of health insurance. This time, when I got the form, I ticked the box that asked if I wanted to see any medical report before it went to the insurers. I heard nothing for more than a month, when my broker rang to say that the insurance company had sent off the form to my doctor several weeks previously, and had subsequently dispatched a reminder, but without response.

I rang my doctor, who said she had done it long ago. I reminded her I had asked to see the report before it went back to the insurers.

As nobody had bothered to tell me the report was there, I asked what extra work was involved, apart from handing the report to me and taking it back. There was no coherent response. The doctor is paid separately by the insurance company in such cases. The British Medical Association subsequently told me the fee should have been levied only if I had required a photocopy of the report. This was not the case, and I am attempting to recover the £7.50.

David Mountain, the chief underwriter with Friends Provident, said that in my case there had been an error. I should have been informed when the form went to my doctor, but I was down as not wishing to see the

report. He confirmed that Friends Provident, like other insurance companies, paid the doctor £20 for a report. He also confirmed that it was not company policy to disclose reasons for "loading". This was up to the client's GP. He would not like, for instance, to have to break it to somebody that he or she had multiple sclerosis. A GP was the proper person to discuss a patient's ailments, and to provide the appropriate reassurance.

All very fair, but Mr Mountain was not able to discount the possibility that a GP, while aware of the patient's ailments,

might not be able to say why he or she had been "loaded". This had been my case, and Richard Street, Sun Alliance's manager for group risk and underwriting, promised to look into it on my behalf.

He looked up my file and told me that I had been "loaded" - actually no increase in premium, but a limit on the extent of the cover - for two reasons: my asthma and my drinking. The obvious moral is to give up drinking, or keep quiet.

On general practice, Mr Street said that where an independent doctor undertook an examination (for which the company pays a

standard rate of £27.50), there was no "automatic process" whereby his findings were made known to either the patient or the patient's GP. When I protested that the examination might uncover some ailment that the GP had missed, he could say only that "medical ethics" would apply, and he was sure that if it were anything serious, the doctor would inform either the patient or the GP. Almost certainly he is right, but I would like to be certain.

Since January 1, 1989, people have had the right to see their own doctor's medical reports done for insurance or employment purposes - unless the doctor feels this would be harmful. But we have no right to find out from an insurance company why we have been "loaded". We should have.

RUPERT MORRIS

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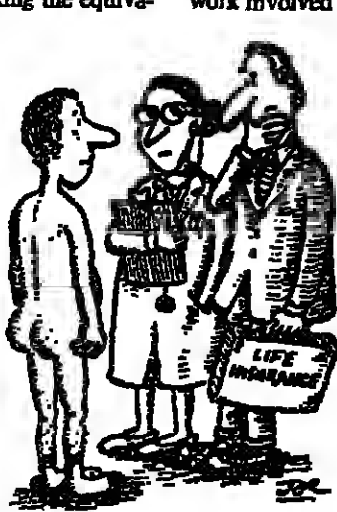
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The last war of liberation for the BBC



Early days: Esther Rantzen in 1971

Joan Bakewell, Angela Rippon and Kate Adie helped end prejudice against female television presenters. Now, Esther Rantzen says, women must enter the door to the executive suite

The problem of wasted female talent is far from unique to the BBC. It is a paradox of our times that women collect at the bottom of the labour pool, like silt. Sir David Attenborough might consider observing the working human female for his next series — in the worst paid jobs women are as multitudinous as the fish in the sea, in the top executive roles they are as rare as unicorns.

This does not just apply to the sweat-shops: walk into any BBC production office and you will find at least half the staff are women. But take the lift to the executive floor and they have almost disappeared. Will the new policies announced last week, the job-sharing, the creches, the women's training programmes, correct the imbalance? Can the BBC achieve the fairly modest target it has set itself and reduce the 90 per cent male domination of its most senior jobs to a mere 70 per cent by 1995?

Theoretically, it could be possible. There are positive precedents, after all. Twenty-five years ago, *Panorama* was a male ghetto and proud of it. In the Sixties it was understood among television executives that women could never read the news; a tragic news item would make them break down and sob in front of the cameras. It was a foolish theory even before Kate Adie outpaced bomb and bullet to disprove it. But it was seriously held, just as it was believed that no woman could direct a variety show because she would be appalled by the comedians' language. I was told in 1968 that I could not report from Belfast because nobody could decide what a female reporter in a war zone should wear. Brilliant pioneering women — Jackie Gillot, Joan Bakewell, Angela Rippon, Sue Lawley — took on that prejudice and defeated it. Further, they proved that viewers enjoy watching talented women on the screen, so that now no producer would consider creating a new programme without women

presenters. The battle on the screen has not been entirely won. I still detect in the spit and sawdust of the BBC's newsrooms traces of the old prejudice. For example, when women presenters venture into the world of entertainment, they face the possibility of not being considered for current affairs programmes. Men are allowed far more leeway. When Sir Robin Day appeared with Morecambe and Wise, cowering under a table in a tin hat, that was just him showing his genial side: more power to him. But after Angela Rippon joined Eric and Ernie's high-kicking chorus line, she was consigned to *Come Dancing*. If women journalists show their legs,

If women journalists show their legs, their colleagues at once label them feet of clay

their colleagues at once label them feet of clay. If Sir David were a woman, his shorts would be his downfall. But, if women have won their on-screen battles, it is behind the scenes that the real problems lie. I first joined television production as a researcher in 1965. Jobs for women were then as precious as gold dust, so when I was given the job of filing 23,000 photographs I was properly grateful. The gratitude wore a little thin after the six tedious months spent bent double over dusty filing cabinets. It wore even thinner when I realised that my men friends from university, my exact contemporaries with precisely my qualifications, were already out directing films for the nightly current affairs programme. It was explained to me, kindly but firmly, that cameramen and sound recordists would not work for women — that was why there were no women film directors. There are now. The battle now is to recruit women as camera-persons, and sound recordists.

Although every television production office is filled with women today, marriage and children still create a conflict in their lives, and make promotion difficult. I had a very talented secretary, Janice Booth, who was about to be promoted to become a production assistant when she got



Still fighting in 1990: Esther Rantzen says she "still detects traces of the old prejudice"

pregnant. She was immediately faced with a choice. If she were to continue her career, her baby would have to be looked after by a child minder. She would not be able to afford a qualified nanny. Janice demanded the best for her daughter, so she resigned, and took part-time work on a freelance basis. Her two daughters amply repay the love, the creative input, the time and skill she has devoted to them. But the television industry, the BBC, have lost her.

I have other colleagues in more senior roles who also put their families first, and for them the new measures would make little difference. They have reached the level of senior producer, have achieved considerable professional reputations. For them, the choice was to move up the BBC's steep ladder of promotion, or to leave and join the industry's pool of freelance producers/directors. They chose to leave. As independents they can pick and choose work to suit their hours, rather than be dominated by the office diary. But also I suspect they made their decision because promotion in television can be

profoundly unattractive. At comparatively junior levels, researchers, directors and producers have immediate contact with programme material, with people and places all over the world. They can walk through any door, the tower block in Paddington, the vaults in the Bank of England, if they are there to make a programme. They can enjoy the crackle of their work on the air, the most exciting and immediate communication with the viewer. The adrenalin of programme-making is addictive. I speak as an addict so seriously hooked that when once I was asked to apply for a senior executive job, I found it impossible even to contemplate unhooking myself from my job as producer/presenter.

But once women tread the ladder of promotion, they must trade this immediate reward for the more subtle ones of commissioning, hiring and firing, allocating budgets, deciding policy. The pastry cooks become the menu-planners. They gain power and status but many women regard these as

millstones, not milestones. So I believe that to achieve the new BBC targets of women in senior management it will take more than a change of working practice by the men who run the BBC. It will take a real change in attitudes and aspiration by the women who work there. They will have to be prepared to fail, and fail publicly. They will have to learn to cut budgets, to withstand painful controversy, criticism and political battles because that is the price of the most senior jobs. They will have to give up the fun, the high of direct programme making. What are the rewards?

The rewards will be the satisfaction of enabling other talent, of expressing female strengths, providing role models in the office and in the studio, on the screen and behind it. The men who run the BBC have opened the door, not wide, but wide enough for women to stop kicking and start walking through it. Will the women in broadcasting have the courage to take up the challenge?

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Oh, jings! Those were the days

In an age of pre-teen love comics, an appreciation of girls who were girls

Few things are as poignant as a really old children's comic. It is a solemn, autumnal thought that the little girls who first giggled over the adventures of Lettice Leefe, the Greenest Girl in the School, are now contemplating the menopause and identifying more with Miss Froth, the headmistress. Belle of the Ballet has long since come down off her points, and probably taken a job as a regional arts administrator; Susan of St Brides will have discarded her starched cap and collar to marry Max, her uncannily respectful boyfriend. Perhaps someone should put up a statue to the Reverend Marcus Morris, the creator of *Eagle* and *Girl*: he tried so hard to keep childhood whole.

It is not entirely his fault that he failed. These melancholy reflections arise from a couple of evenings spent immersed in Denis Gifford's loving compilation of *The Best of Girl Annual 1952-1959*. The period appears to have been a golden one: after a rocky start in 1961 the sister paper to the more famous *Eagle* hit its stride rapidly and — with Mr Morris guided by thousands of young readers' letters — found a formula which worked.

At least, it worked until the Sixties struck: after the Cavern Club I doubt whether even the most gently brought-up girls would any longer have put up with profiles on the lines of "Dennis Louis... with his 'dashing pink-painted piano', or indeed 'Kenneth More, a naturally gay person'."

Girl had a peculiar and endearing way with hell-raisers: there is a profile of Vivien Leigh which succeeds in mentioning two marriages but no divorce, and describes her nervous breakdown as "like an overworked motor-car... she was reconditioned, re-gearred and returned ready for the road again!". And the account of "shy, polite" Richard Burton and his wife Sybil is positively inspiring. At least, it inspires you to turn the page quickly and "Make a Tyrolean Belt".

But that was stodgy Fifties fare. Far more important about *Girl* are the comic-strips, and an evening with these should wipe the patronising smile off any modern woman's face. The gloomy truth is that today's girl-childhood are offered absolutely nothing that comes near them for quality, breadth and feminist vision. Some, to be sure, are mere school and hospital soap operas, but they ranged wider than that. When Clare Francis and Naomi James were still in ankle socks, let me tell you, there was Captain Starling, flame-haired skipper of the yacht *Kestrel* ("Sam! Cram on all the sail she'll carry!"). There was Summa of her South Sea Isles, always game to save a pearl-diver from the jaws of a giant clam, and Martine, creeping over pagoda roofs to foil the bandits of

Huo Ming. All these girls — and even Susan of St Brides, the kind-hearted student nurse, — are drawn with strong features, clear eyes, and bodies robust enough to row against storms ("Jings! My strength's giving out!"). Their clothes, moreover, are suitable for clambering up ivy and through subterranean passages. None of them show the slightest tendency to define themselves through boyfriends, conform to social pressures or slump into premature widowhood. They are young and free and just as good as boys, and they know it: years before Greer, these were no female eunuchs. Coming in young at the dog-

end of it all, I vaguely remember the pleasure of stories in which girls led and instigated, instead of forever being rescued. Reading today's teenage girls' magazines it does not take long to see what has happened. If there is a drawn strip, then lips pout, breasts are up-tilted, and great tears roll down flawless cheeks. If there is an article on "What's more important? Boyfriends or a career?" it will hastily disown its message with "Speaking of careers, have you ever dreamt of being a model?" Not only is the vocabulary of all sub-teenage magazines minute, with everything "awesome!" or "mega groovy"; but the girls' magazines relentlessly reinforce the view that life without a boy is empty.

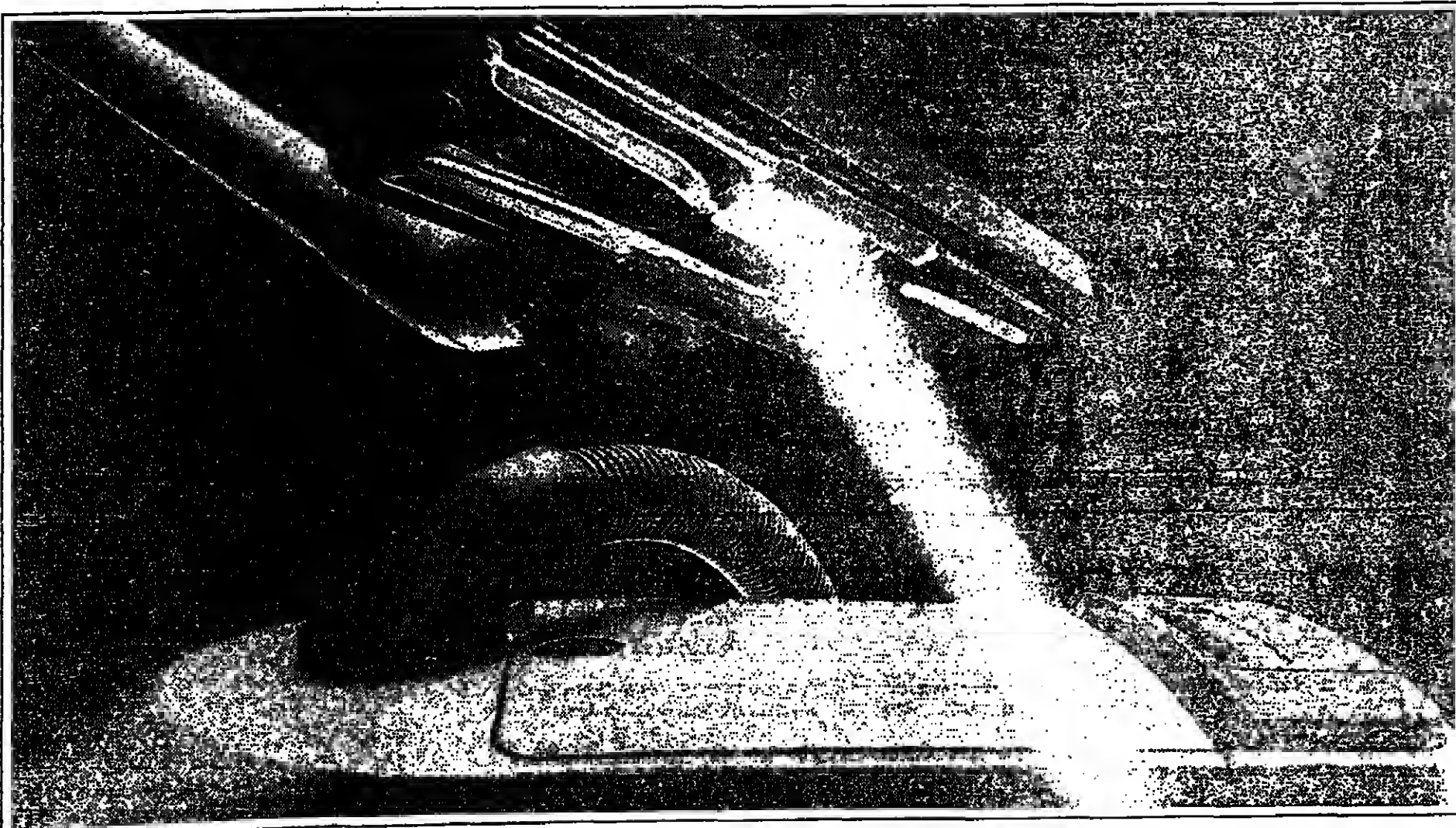
Fresh from the jarring fantasy of Wendy and Max rescuing a kidnapped heiress in their canoe, it is a shock to read the 1990 problem pages. They do their best, but betray a readership of girls enslaved by tawdry images of sexuality. The adjoining pages and advertisements all show girls leaning dependently on boys' chests: the *Girl* girl was at least offered models of self-assertion and bloody-minded independence.

So what happened to *Girl*? It died in the Sixties, was revived as a comic in 1980 by IPC, then relaunched with more fashion, beauty and pop to attract advertisers. It failed, and was ignominiously merged with *My Girl* in March of this year.

"It's romantic photo-stories," says Jackie Newcombe, publisher of young women's magazines at IPC. "With the odd social issue, of course. Like Aids." Absolutely no chance, then, of reviving any storylines about daring girl explorers wrestling giant clams? "You're joking. If you suggested that stuff to today's 13-year-olds they would say, 'Nah, it's got to be rap and hip-hop and lots of guys'. And it's got to have swearing in it. They always ask for street language." Even if they had asked, one feels, Mr Morris would not have given it to them.

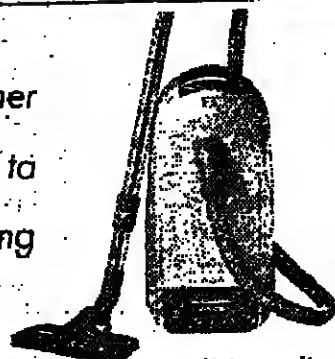
LIBBY PURVES

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Best of *Girl*, by Denis Gifford, will be published by Webb & Bower on October 25, (£14.95).



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Apple aims for big bite of the cherry

Computer giants in cut-price battle

Personal computer prices are continuing to fall as their manufacturers try to revive a dormant market with sharply falling growth rates. Computer magazines now advertise a host of less well known makes and a few more famous ones that start at less than £500.

In what is clearly a buyers' market, one of the best known computer companies, Apple, has decided that there might be something in the "pile them high, sell them cheap" strategy that made Amstrad's original personal computers so successful.

This week Apple announced a long awaited new range of three Macintosh computers that start from £660 (including VAT) - almost half the price of its current cheapest model.

Called the Macintosh Classic and aimed at first time users, the cheapest black and white machine comes with one megabyte of memory and a floppy disc drive. It pitches Apple back into competition with IBM for cheaper machines. IBM recently announced its own computer for first time users - the PS/1 which sells for about £1,000.

Apple used its Macintosh computers to pioneer the concept of desktop publishing. Although the Classic will handle popular DTP packages, customers who want to use more sophisticated software will have to opt for the more expensive version with hard disc and increased memory that takes the price above £1,000.

A better choice for such applications might be the second new model, the LC, a relatively cheap colour computer with 2 megabytes of memory and a 40-megabyte hard disc at around £1,700. It includes a microphone to record and store voice messages with a computer file "in much the same way as handwritten notes are added to printed documents", says the company.

For serious business use there is a cheaper version of the Macintosh II series at around £2,600 - which includes the ability to place voice recordings in files so that they can "speak" to the reader.

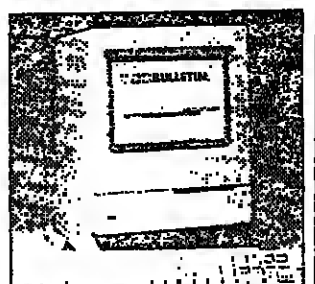
The problem for many buyers of personal computers is

that having decided on what level of power is required there is increasingly little difference between most brands.

That has not been the case with Apple which has never followed the rest of the market in producing machines compatible with the industry standard of IBM compatibility imposed by the runaway success of IBM's initial personal computer.

The difference has been both a strength and a weakness. Initially it gave Apple the ability to produce machines admired for their easy to use picture-based software.

Now competitors have been able to emulate many of the best features - helped most recently by the success of the Windows 3.0 program that can give IBM-style personal computers the same look and feel as a Macintosh yet remain compatible with industry standard software.



Challenger: Classic computer

Apple is also facing competition in the emerging market for multi-media systems that mix video pictures, sound and text.

Its products have begun to look seriously overpriced. Until now the company has managed to retain a gross profit margin of more than 50 per cent - considerably higher than its rivals.

But Apple's conversion to the idea of selling more and cheaper products did not impress the stock market this week, which is concerned about reduced profit margins.

Along with cheaper computers Apple is expected to become more amenable to licensing the Macintosh technology to others so that Macintosh clones may appear. The company has recently been in discussions with both Toshiba and Sony on the possibility of producing a laptop computer.

MATTHEW MAY

After North Sea gas and oil, engineers are now working on generating electricity from the oceans. Nick Nuttall reports

Free power from beneath the waves

British marine engineers are working with the Taiwanese government and industry to harvest electricity from the sea using a novel method known as ocean thermal energy conversion (Otec).

The five-megawatt project, which would provide power for about 5,000 homes, could lead to the wide-scale commercial development of a form of renewable energy claimed to be one of the world's most environmentally benign.

Unlike tidal and wave power, Otec systems work 24 hours a day, exploiting the temperature difference between the warm surface seas and the deep, cold, polar waters found in tropical and sub-tropical regions at 1,000-metre depths.

Many of the countries in these regions are reliant on fuel imports. Recent estimates from the United States calculate that 60,000 megawatts of the world's electricity could be generated from the oceans' temperature gradients by the year 2010.

Britain, with offshore engineering skills developed from its North Sea oil exploration, is funding technical and economic research on Otec systems at several academic centres, including Manchester and Newcastle universities. The research is co-ordinated by the Marine Technology Directorate in London, and could form part of Wealth from the Oceans, a new trade and industry initiative.

Many of the nations that could benefit from the vast renewable

energy potential of their neighbouring seas are also keen to promote agriculture and aquaculture. Otec systems, apart from generating electricity, bring up nutrient-rich cold waters from the deep that could be discharged into tanks, sited next to power stations, for raising fish and shellfish, and high-value marine plants such as seaweed for food and medical purposes.

'Virtually all the capital costs will be paid off in eight years'

Tests in Hawaii, where state-funded projects have been under investigation since the Seventies, indicate that when the nutrient-rich waters are exposed to warm sunlight at the surface, the growth of marine animals and plants is accelerated several-fold.

In addition, areas of the world with coastal borders that are short of drinking and irrigation water, such as the Caribbean island of St Lucia, can use part of an Otec plant's electricity production to desalinate sea water.

Studies are also being conducted around the world to develop Otec "grazing" systems that would roam the oceans, generating electricity to mine sea-bed minerals or to process ores at sea. The processing plants could also be used to split water into oxygen and hydrogen. The hydrogen could be shipped as a liquid fuel

or used as a raw material for making energy-intensive fertilisers.

Details of the Taiwanese plans, published in the autumn issue of the Society for Underwater Technology's journal, *Underwater Technology*, comes at a time of growing interest.

Don Lennard, the director and chief executive of the Marine Technology Directorate in London and the managing director of Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion Systems, of Orpington in Kent, says the present 2.5 per cent efficiency of such systems is poor when compared with a coal-fired or oil-fired power station, but the fuel is free.

Mr Lennard, a consultant to the Taiwanese programme, says "It is an equation between the capital costs of an inefficient system, typically \$10,000 per kilowatt, and the much lower cost of a coal-fired or oil-fired power station, less than \$1,000 per kilowatt, but which you have to keep paying to fuel."

Calculations indicate that, with oil at \$28 to \$30 a barrel, the economic equation begins swinging in favour of Otec stations. At \$40 a barrel the attractiveness soars because virtually all the capital costs will be paid off after eight-and-a-half years.

Most international effort has concentrated on the Otec closed-cycle system, in which a heat exchange fluid, such as ammonia, is evaporated, creating power to turn a generator, and the cold water re-



Vision of the future: an artist's impression of a factory ship, powered by electricity generated from the heat of the oceans

condenses the fluid to continue the process. Put simply, Mr Lennard says, the system mimics the domestic refrigerator in reverse.

In the Taiwanese scheme, envisaged as a seven-year test prototype which may lead to larger commercial plants, planners have opted for a shore-based plant, where the cold water intake pipe will run out from the Otec power station into the sea. Nevertheless, British engineers

envisage that floating plants, such as a 10-megawatt system devised by Otec and sited offshore, will be the way forward.

The main hurdle, however, which supporters of such systems need to overcome is the traditional scepticism of financiers towards new technologies. "When the first commercial one is built, I am convinced they will snowball rapidly," Mr Lennard says.

Space spin-off helps heart checks

Centre in Houston. He needed a system that could be used repeatedly on astronauts to ensure that their hearts were working well, without exposing them to dangerous amounts of radiation.

Dr Lacey selected tantalum-178, which has a half-life of only 9.3 minutes. This is long enough to produce images, but not long enough to cause unnecessary exposure. It decays 30 times more quickly than technetium-99, an isotope normally used for such procedures.

To match the new isotope, Dr Lacey devised a new camera which is much lighter than existing ones and capable of producing better images. This uses a crossed matrix

Portable machine is cheaper and safe to use on infants

rather than crystals of sodium iodide. According to Xenos, it is five times faster and produces twice the resolution of conventional cameras while weighing only a third as much.

The Xenos system appears ideally suited to "first-pass" studies of the heart, in which the radiolabelled isotope is imaged as it reaches the heart. Existing systems do not do this very effectively, relying instead on imaging a large succession of heartbeats

and averaging, which often produces unsatisfactory test results.

The first Xenos system in the United Kingdom may be installed at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast. A group from the hospital travelled to Houston to see the system working and are now trying to raise the money to buy the hardware and set up a four-year research study of it in the hospital.

Dr Jimmy Laird, a radiologist at the hospital, lists the system's advantages. First, he says, it is genuinely portable which existing systems, weighing half a ton, are not. This means it could be used in emergency situations, to look, for example, at the heart of a patient

admitted to casualty after an apparent heart attack.

It produces a much lower radiation dose, one twentieth of conventional systems, which means that it could be used on infants, excluded from this type of diagnostic at present because their low body weight means that radiation doses are too high. Dr Laird says that the Xenos system is not capable of replacing all existing gamma cameras, but that it is very promising.

Joe Dickinson, who runs Xenos's European operations from Old Trafford, Manchester, says that it will also be a lot cheaper, selling for about £90,000 against nearer £140,000 for existing systems. He is hoping to bring two into Europe during 1991, one for Belfast and another for a hospital in Gothenberg, Sweden.

NIGEL HAWKES

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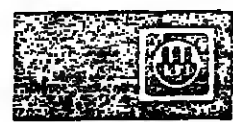
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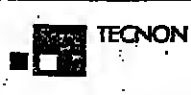
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Translated by Raymond Rosenthal
Michael Joseph, £13.99

ALICE MUNRO knows how to do some things better than almost anyone else. Her stories are intimate, like private jokes or family photographs, but she describes love (for the promise of it, or the memory of it) in unfamiliar ways. Her latest collection begins and ends with a reckoning. In "Friend of My Youth" a daughter's recollection of her dead mother helps her come to terms with the past. In "Wigtime", a daughter returns to nurse her dying mother. Her hope increases for the dimly-perceived future. The practice of treating the past, and the future, as special cases of the present is widespread in Friend of My Youth. Time travel makes up for a lack of mobility elsewhere.

The stories refer to events in the Lakeside town of Walley, Ontario. Munro sifts the wreckage of the female population and turns up disappointments, aimless lives, and messy marriages. Her men are monsters of inwardness. The storytelling is less straightforward than her elegant prose makes it appear. The style is alert with anxiety and desire. Through parallels and overlaps of coincidence, she explores a pattern in the lives of unspectacular women who nurture their dreams in solitude and then, with ferocious intensity, project them onto the world.

If Munro's writing, even at its most quixotic and strange, is grounded in reality, Primo Levi addresses the corollary issue of whether estrangement can any longer be avoided. The glaring fact of Levi's life was his incarceration in Auschwitz. As a writer, turning that experience into literature, he kept his anger in check. Seldom does the reader feel that Levi is on the verge of an outburst.

The stories now translated in The Sixth Day originally appeared during the Sixties. They fall into the science fiction category, although there is nothing artificial about the horrors Levi describes. The approach to experience is as complex as anything to be found in *The Book of David* or *The Drowned and the Saved*. Shame, according to Levi, was the legacy of survivors. It invades the stricken landscape of *The Sixth Day*. A feeling of complicity is inescapable. He communicates a sense of pain that cannot be absorbed, given its place.

In "Psychophant" an exclusive dinner party is shocked by the conjuring up of a gadget that reveals the inner image of anybody who holds it. Gadgets take up much of *The Sixth Day*. A couple of stories, for instance, describe the Mimer, a copier that reproduces in depth, duplicating identity as well as matter. It's a pretty conceit. There is a fear in it.



Playing devil's advocate with aplomb: Piers Paul Read, raking over everything from good and evil to international politics and the needs of women

Jesus rose: or did He really?

Victoria Glendinning on a tense theological shroud-ripper: odd body in a tomb; monk hangs himself; pax vobiscum

ON THE THIRD DAY He rose again from the dead. Suppose He did not — what would the implications be for individual believers, for Christianity as a whole, for world politics? And how could it be proved that the Resurrection was a lie? Only by the discovery of the human remains of Jesus of Nazareth.

This is what Piers Paul Read's new novel is about. It is a theological thriller — just the genre, if genre it be, to suit his tastes and gifts for the macabre, for moral dilemmas, historical reconstruction, and non-English settings. In 1988 Michael Dagan, a distinguished Israeli archaeologist, is asked by his son, who works for Israeli Intelligence, to examine something that has been found under the old retaining walls of what was once Herod's Temple in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem. Bugging devices are being planted in the ancient tunnels to cavesdrop on the leaders of the Palestinian intifada; in the course of opening up the labyrinth, they have found an oil-jar containing a skeleton with a

huge crusty nail through its ankles and scratch-marks, as from thorns, on its skull.

This is creepy enough; but Father Lambert, the leading British archaeologist whom Dagan secretly summons to inspect the skeleton, is a particularly bold and charismatic monk, who after his return to London is discovered dead, hanging from the window of his cell. It is assumed by Andrew, his devoted pupil, that Lambert committed suicide on being faced with the knowledge that his whole life was wasted: for if there was no Resurrection then Jesus was not the Son of God. Suicide is a mortal sin, and the superior of the order convinces in a cover-up.

Young Andrew notices that Father Lambert's notebook is missing from his desk. Maybe the monk was murdered? Maybe the find too is a hoax: it is supported by a newly-discovered codex in Vilnius, which makes reference to the belief that the Romans stole

ON THE THIRD DAY

By Piers Paul Read
Secker & Warburg, £13.99

Jesus's body from the tomb and buried it in an oil-jar. But the codex also could be a forgery.

Dramatic incidents, as gripping as the discovery of the skeleton, or of the monk's body hanging from the window, stud the novel at strategic intervals. There is a moment of suspense so acute — when someone is about to be assassinated with a poisoned syringe in the church in London's Soho Square — that your reviewer had to put the book down and walk around the room before she could turn the page. There is a lot of sex in it too, since Andrew, released from his vow of celibacy by the discovery that Jesus was a mere man, makes ecstatic love to Dagan's daughter Anna. But at the root this is a discussion-novel.

Priests, cardinals, archaeologists, and Andrew's worldly brother Henry analyse the implications of the still-unpublished discovery in a series of seminars.

It is not always easy reading, as the scholarly arguments swing back and forth. Pontius Pilate may have hidden the body, and encouraged the idea of the Resurrection, in order to foster a mild and non-aggressive religion that could bring stability to his troubled province. The modern liberal theologians welcome the discovery, since many of them have ceased to believe literally in the Resurrection anyhow. Atheistic Henry thinks that Christian gentleness stems from "fear of life", and that religious vocations are by definition indications of psychosis. What a relief, if Jesus was just a good man and not God.

But if it is a hoax, who perpetrated it? Who gains from undermining the central tenet of Christianity? Perhaps Gorbachev,

afraid of an upsurge of religion under perestroika. Or maybe the Israelis: they have a propaganda crisis now that the supply of war criminals is running out; and American Jews will not be able to determine American policy for long because of the growing influence of Catholic Hispanics and southern Baptists.

Those who know Read's own religious position will not be amazed by the way the mystery is finally unravelled, though he plays the devil's advocate with aplomb. It is not only questions of faith, and of good and evil, that get raked over here, but patriotism, international politics, marital ethics, the needs of women, the care of children, ambition, corruption, the nature of necrosis. Much of this is tediousness, and a lot to cover in 280 pages.

But the only thing that stops *On The Third Day* from being altogether brilliant is the writing itself, which is sometimes pedestrian, or turgid, or just slack, as if Read cared so much for what he was saying that he cared too little for how he said it. Nevertheless, it's essential reading.

Stardust gets in your face-lift

Anne Barnes

HIS LITTLE WOMEN

By Judith Rossner
Sinclair-Stevenson, £13.95

QUEENDOM COME

By Ellen Galford
Virago, £4.99

THE DEVIL'S SPECTACLES

By David Alexander
A & B, £12.99

A WOMAN TO BE LOVED

By James Mitchell
Sinclair-Stevenson, £14.99



Judith Rossner in *Wonderland*

mixes self-indulgence with strength. The action takes place in Edinburgh, where Albanna, a chieftainess and Ancient Briton, suddenly appears from the realms of the dead to visit the last few years of the 20th century. All is not well in the British Isles. A highly repressive female prime minister is busy, like a bossy nanny, firming up her framework of social control. The gap between those who conform and those who do

not is being forcibly widened by the stream of penalties which pour down on the poor, the homeless, the rebellious or sexually deviant. Albanna's arrival "to save her people" provides some comic ironies mixed with force of the school dorm variety. Half the ingenuity, and more time to relish it, might have made the message more telling.

David Alexander works out a different sort of fantasy. In *The*

Devil's Spectacles he describes a group of people living in that part of the Scottish Highlands where many livelihoods depend on summer tourism. When the Loch Ness Monster turns out to be simply a huge slug that self-destructs when lifted from the water, it is clear that some other mystery must be found to keep the tourists coming. Fortunately, someone stumbles on deep underground caves, which only need a little painting-up in the manner of Lascaux, to be passed off as the most important archaeological find of the century.

The intricacies of the deception fascinate the author. He is shrewd in his analysis of the vanities both of archaeologists and of steadfast believers in unlikely interference from spacemen. Perhaps, in this way, it is more a journalist's account of patterns of behaviour than a novelist's account of the interplay of personalities. The formula followed in James Mitchell's *A Woman to be Loved* leaves no room for uncertainty. It is the story of a girl's recovery from her experiences as an ambulance driver in the Great War, and the sadness of her adjustment to an empty life afterwards. However, she is beautiful, slim, intelligent and caring, so she escapes from her narrow-minded mother, seizes her independence, does good in the world, and becomes a celebrity. It may be the stuff dreams are made of. It is the stuff that television serials are made of. But it is a dry stick of a novel.

After Booker hype, wheels of Mammon

Nicola Murphy

AT THE Booker dinner Sir Denis Forman, the chairman of the judges, sent out a prayer to "the only effective deity working in the world of Thatcher". "Please, oh Mammon," he begged, "make market forces work to the benefit of the novel." By yesterday morning Mammon wheels were already in motion at A. S. Byatt's publisher, Chatto & Windus, to ensure that, in addition to the original run of 29,000 copies, 50,000 reprints

would arrive tomorrow. Foreign rights have been widely sold, and next week sees the launch of the American edition, and a nice *New York Times* review.

Meanwhile that some Wednesday morning, Hatchards might have pondered whether Chatto weren't a little premature in their orders. John McGahern's *Amused Women* and Beryl Bainbridge's *In A Family Big Adventure* were selling better than the winning novel, Terry Malher, chairman of Pentos, was more

confident about *Possession*'s prospects: "In the next few weeks Dillons will sell all of their 2,000-3,000 stock." Most of the public, in fact, will be waiting for the paperback, which is scheduled for publication early next year. "Winning the Booker means a dramatic increase in the print run," said Frances Condy from Vintage, the paperback imprint. "It would have been 70,000, now we're looking at 150,000. And of course we're absolutely thrilled for the book itself."

"I'm very fond of *Possession*, said the author. "But I feel a long way away from it, as the book went to the publishers a year and a half ago. Now I have a terrible need to make things go back to normal." As for winning the Booker, she was perhaps most delighted to receive a telephone call from Iris Murdoch who "so hates the phone". And Wednesday afternoon Antonia Byatt still hadn't got around to putting the £20,000 cheque in the bank. Money just wasn't on her mind.

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Heroine sleuth on job

CRIME

Marcel Berlins

POSTMORTEM

By Patricia Daniels Cornwell
Macdonald, £12.95

THE supply of excellent American women crime writers with strong sleuth-heroines seems inexhaustible. Cornwell's character is Dr Kay Scarpetta, chief medical officer of the state of Virginia. There is a series of sadistic killings of young women in their own bedrooms, with nothing to link the victims. Scarpetta's job — her accession to which dismayed local male networks — is on the line if she doesn't produce a result. Her research is tampered with, the suspects include her own about-to-be lover, and the chief cop is a red-necked misogynist. Terrific first novel, full of suspense, in which even the scientific bits grip.

● *Kaddish in Dublin*, by John Brady (*Constable*, £12.95). Dublin Garda's Inspector Matt Minogue, masking his cultured poetry-loving sensitivity with a bog- Irish facade ("Why ruin a good stereotype?" he remarks), hunts the executioner of Jewish Supreme Court judge's journalist son. Palestinian motives look most likely, then another death raises the possibility of sinister Catholic involvement, reaching the inner recesses of Irish political life. Brady's best informed, subtle, and intelligent, with Minogue revealing a hitherto unseen depth of soul, humour, and emotion.

● *Trial by Fire*, by Frances Fyfield (*Heinemann*, £12.95). Soulless Essex commuter village hosts plethora of lurking evil, culminating in the finding of a woman's body in the woods, viciously bludgeoned and stabbed. Superintendent Bailey leads the enquiry, his unlikely co-baiter, Crown Prosecutor Helen West, disbelieving the obvious evidence, becomes a reluctant snapper, putting their relationship, and herself, at risk. The cast, exceptionally well drawn, includes a simple-minded sexually advanced thief, a manipulative, precocious schoolgirl, and a randy English teacher. Many chilling moments lead to superb unexpected climax.

● *The Becket Factor*, by Michael David Anthony (*Collins*, £12.95). The Becket is Thomas, and a newly unearthed coffin might contain his remains — which could awaken religious controversy, just when a new Archbishop of Canterbury is about to be chosen. An elderly Canon dies in suspicious circumstances, and Richard Harrison, formerly of British Intelligence, now diocesan (disappointingly, officer) finds himself in the centre of diabolical, political, and espionage intrigue. Impressive first novel.

● *Mayhem in Parva*, by Nancy Livingston (*Gollancz*, £12.95). Mr Pringle, tax inspector (retired), visits his roots at Wuffing Parva. A runaway hearse bashes into his car, he stumbles on village worthy Doris, bumped off and wearing a woollen hat with an Aztec pattern belonging to village nuisance Miranda. The body vanishes. Among many other ingredients: suspicious Saxon wall paintings, mysterious Swedish honey-mooners, and a "frogs have rights" campaign. Livingston's characters inhabit a uniquely surreal, lurid world of criminality. Her oddball humour is not to everyone's taste. But on form, no one can pack so many laugh-out-louds into one book.

● *Vengeance*, by Max Marquis (*Macmillan*, £11.95). Axe in OC's head, crossbow in courier, policeman, gained down: Inspector Harry Timberlake seeks hidden links between apparently random events; tries to prevent continuation of sequence, while coping with ambivalent emotions over competing love affairs. Formula well-handled, climax paced.

● *The Dead Do Not Praise*, by Pauline Bell (*Macmillan*, £11.95). Comfortably old-fashioned past-tense asking traditional whodunnit questions: who did for the unpopular headmistress in her study? The apparently spinsterish victim had sexy underwear: there's an assortment of variously motivated suspects, and sound school atmosphere of the comprehensive rather than public kind. Good debut, but Bell must contain her penchant for caricature. Frenchmen, and working-class characters, who drop initial aitches and final gees.

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ARTS

BRIEFING

French weave

THE French have walked off with the 1990 European Museum of the Year Award. It goes to the Ecomuseum in Fournies, an old textile manufacturing town near the Luxembourg border. The Ecomuseum, which has one of the largest collections of working textile machinery in the world, wins a cash prize and a small Henry Moore sculpture. Museums which have just opened, or have been reorganised within the last two years, were eligible. Of seven considered "outstanding" among the 34 candidates this year, two were British: the National Waterways Museum, Gloucester, and the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford.

Not a prayer

THESE are tough days for the top Asian-music promoter, Jay Visva-Dey. First he heard that Greater London Arts was not giving him a grant for his current season of Indian classical concerts, including such leading musicians as Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan. Later on the same day his main sponsor — the listless magazine *City Limits* — went into receivership. Now he is engaged in a theological dispute with the Central Hall, Westminster, regarding a concert by the Pakistani devotional singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Apparently, the promoter of sacred music is regarded within the Central Hall, unless the devotion is addressed to the correct deity.

Chair leader

MORE news seeps out of Oxford about the imminent appointment of Ian McKellen as the next visiting professor of drama. The playwright Arthur Miller was apparently not under consideration for the year-long appointment, spiced by the impresario director Mackintosh. But as Stephen Sondheim was the first professor, it was felt that "a second should be British." McKellen and the playwright Willy Russell were the top contenders. McKellen, of all se, is a Cambridge man.



Ian McKellen: Oxford bound

Last chance... The *Edwardians* and *After* offers a rare opportunity to see a selection of some of the finest sculptures and paintings assembled from the Royal Academy's own collection spanning the period 1900 to 1940 (and selected by Royal Academician Lawrence Gowing). Much of the work, submitted by Academy members to represent the way in which they wished to be seen by posterity, will be put back into storage when the exhibition closes on Sunday (071-439 7438).

CINEMA; NEW RELEASES

Too much like hard work

Geoff Brown on *Bird on a Wire*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Match Factory Girl* and a Japanese season including *The Enchantment*. David Robinson on *Silent Scream* and *Salute of the Jugger*

Trying to entertain an audience can be back-breaking work. In *Bird on a Wire* (Plaza, 12), the film-makers hurl male pin-up Mel Gibson and the perennially cute Goldie Hawn through a barrage of death-defying chases, serial jaunts, and explosions. At the end, Gibson and the baddies battle for survival in a well-stocked zoo, dodging bullets and the malevolent intentions of six tigers, four alligators, a shoal of piranhas, and one baboon. Around 200 artists and technicians slaved behind the screen, headed by the director John Badham; 17 stuntmen risked their lives to thrill us. All this plus 25 parrots.

Yet their mountain of effort has only produced one of the worst cinematic molochs for some time. Even action extravaganzas need a decent story; *Bird on a Wire* offers just the skeleton of a yarn about a protected court witness (Gibson) on the run from the drug dealer he helped put behind bars. To make matters chancier, his college girlfriend — now a hot-shot New York lawyer — crosses his path at a Detroit petrol station at the exact moment when the avenging villain finds his prey. The old acquaintances begin their nightmare ride as sparring partners; they end, of course, with flames rekindled.

The film equally fails as a star vehicle. Gibson displays his usual attributes — blue eyes, gravel voice, a manly chest — but cannot put flesh on his anorexic character. Goldie Hawn wears the years

Hurled through a barrage: Mel Gibson and Goldie Hawn in *Bird on a Wire*

well, but wastes her energies on a demeaning role: when ever physical calamity threatens, this smart corporate lawyer screams "Oh my God!"

Noise plays an important part throughout: squealing tyres, raging animals, blumping music. But the ultimate noise is of a hollow, top-heavy Hollywood concoction crashing ignominiously to the ground.

A feature-length cartoon requires even more labour than any live-action frolic. *The Little Mermaid* (Warner West End, Odeon Marble Arch, U) employed nearly 600 people, beavering away for three years to turn Hans Christian Andersen's tale into a Disney film fit to stand alongside *Snow White* and *The Seven Dwarfs*. *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty*. There has not been a new Disney fairy-tale for 30 years.

Employees spent a good deal of time looking over their shoulders at the past. Ariel the mermaid boasts the familiar large, cute eyes; another Disney trademark, trails of twinkling dust, has been simply

replaced by twinkling bubbles, dancing round the underwater creatures. The tale's Prince Charming — Prince Eric, in fact — is as bland as his forebears; while the seawitch, Ursula, seems a compendium of villainesses, particularly Maleficent from *Sleeping Beauty*.

Yet this is no archaic revival. The directors, John Musker and Ron Clements, maintain a nervous pace geared to the short attention span of today's young viewers; while the Oscar-winning score by Alan Menken dribbles fashionably over the ears. Only the Caribbean-flavoured number "Under the Sea" has the force of character to seep inside one's memory. *The Little Mermaid* is bright and busy enough to keep children amused; but sterner adults may find the old fairy-tale magic squeezed out by the film's synthetic mixture of styles.

Perhaps the week's most striking film, *The Match Factory Girl* (Electric Portobello Road, 15), was made with a fraction of Disney's work-

force. The same man — Aki Kaurismäki — wrote, directed, and edited, stamping his unique perspective on life over every frame. The Finnish wonderboy's last creation, *Leningrad Cowboys Go America*, was a silly indulgence; this film, by contrast, lodges in the mind with a bullet's force.

His heroine is a match factory drudge, trod upon both at work and home, where she lives — mostly in silence — with her mother and stepfather. A night out means a dejected dance hall, the *Laundrette*, or a bad Marx Brothers movie (she cries). She believes she has found her own Prince Charming, but the man abuses her like every-body else. The worm finally turns, and buys rat poison.

Kaurismäki's declared aim was to make a film bleak and cryptic enough to make the austere French director Robert Bresson seem positively profligate. He succeeds, though not at the expense of audience interest: black, sly

humour pokes through many of the domestic scenes, and Kati Outinen's plaintive looks irradiate a character who could easily seem a dull, dreadful doormat.

This is far more than an exercise in style: Kaurismäki digs away at his critique of Finnish society, while his characters are caught in their usual desperate dance of thwarted desires, betrayal and death. *The Match Factory Girl* is a bracing experience.

The Enchantment opens a three-week season at the ICA devoted to "Young Japanese Cinema". In plot terms, Shunichi Nagasaki's film is actually on the old side: Forties Hollywood knew all about split personalities, susceptible psychopaths and dotting secretaries.

Lesbian relationships provide a new ingredient, though Nagasaki's dawdling manner and low-budget Tokyo settings never engender the hot-house atmosphere the characters' actions invite.

GEOFF BROWN

Compelling portrait of a tragic prisoner

Winner of the Michael Powell Award for Best British Film at this year's Edinburgh Film Festival, *Silent Scream* (15, Metro 1), is an ambitious first film by the stage director and actor, David Hayman. Co-produced by Channel 4, the British Film Institute and the Scottish Film Production Fund, it confirms the emergence of an authentic Scottish school of film making.

The script is by Bill Beech, who met the protagonist of this real-life story when working as an art student, with the inmates of the special prison unit at Barlinnie. Larry Winters produced a remarkable series of self-analytical poems and stories; and Bill Beech actually discussed with him the possibility of a film biography.

Larry's story and personality are explored in the random impressions of his final drug delirium. The plan is confused, though, by framing it within the story of his mother's last visit to the prison on the day of his death. Recurrent scenes in the prison video control room, and a

device of having Larry's fantasies invade the monitors there, add further complications.

The memories pass freely back and forth between childhood in Glasgow and rural Cardiside, school, holiday outings, the army, 13 years of prison experience, a memorable day's return home on parole. Often we rely on the state of Larry's ever-changing hair and beard to indicate time and place. There are additional interpolations of animated drawings, originally made by Bill Beech to illustrate Larry's poems.

Continuity is provided by Ian Glen's compelling performance. Even if the fragmentary form of the script never allows him or the viewer to penetrate far into Winters' personality, he is a fascinating, tragic figure — attractive,

articulate, alternately gentle and vicious, bewildered by his own violence.

But there is an obligation in this kind of real-life story to provide a modicum of information. Here information often seems sacrificed to self-conscious artistry, frustrating what we would like or need to know about the character. We learn little about the physical circumstances of the childhood, or of the relationships, even with his mother, of this remote and enigmatic figure.

The Salute of the Jugger (18, Cannon Panion Street, Scala King's Cross, ICA Cinema) is even more enigmatic. Filmed in Australia, this minimalist future-fantasy was directed and scripted by David Peoples, writer (or re-writer) of *Leviathan*, *Laid to Rest*, *Predator* and *Blade Runner*.

In a devastated future, the only distraction amidst the desperate struggle for survival is *The Game*, a form of team combat whose rules are elusive except that the prize is a dog's skull. The film follows the fortunes and ultimate victory of one of the wandering teams of "Juggers" who compete in the League. The team stars are Rutger Hauer and new recruit Joan Chen (from *The Last Emperor*).

The dialogue is impenetrably cryptic, and thrown away in asides. At least, however, the story seems to have no metaphoric pretensions, unless in respect of David Peoples' reported ambition, "I've always wanted to write a pro-football story."

DAVID ROBINSON

DANCE

Hill climbing

A new American recruit strengthens the lineup of principal dancers for the Royal Ballet, as Debra Craine reports

Ballet directors dream about a tall, dark and handsome male dancer with long, elegant limbs, an aristocratic bearing and a polished technique. Anthony Dowell has just found one.

Today the Royal Ballet director will announce the signing, effective January 1, of American Robert Hill as a principal artist, an obvious successor to Jonathan Cope who retired last season as the company's leading male dancer. Hill's signing follows this summer's coup — the luring of Irek Mukhamedov from the Bolshoi — and gives Dowell two contrasting performers who, between them, could embrace all aspects of the repertoire.

The announcement will probably provoke the kind of xenophobic sentiment that questions the need to bring yet more foreigners into Britain's biggest ballet company. Some of the company's own male dancers will undoubtedly feel further frustrated as they watch their already limited opportunities for performance diminish with every passing guest artist. But this latest hiring will provide Dowell with what he desperately needs: a reliable partner with enough presence and stature to complement the company's taller women.

Whereas Mukhamedov was the fiery grandeur of an extroverted Russian on stage, Hill is ballet's equivalent of the Hollywood leading man — sophisticated and romantic. The American's style, with its attention to detail and line, is compatible with the Royal's own, while his warm and spontaneous dramatic approach is refreshing. But he has yet to prove if he can match Mukhamedov's thrilling athletic magnetism.

At six-foot-one, with a strong lean build, the 29-year-old Hill was born to be a ballet prince, albeit a reluctant one. "Because of my physique, yes I am a prince, but that's not me inside. I have a lot more passion than these two-dimensional characters who don't give me enough range of expression. Physically they are not as rewarding as something more contemporary."

And the fact that being a prince is his stock in trade on the international guest artist circuit? "It is ironic, but business is business and you have to do certain things to enable you to do what you want." With the Royal he will continue to dance the traditional repertoire but wants to work with choreographers on contemporary ballets which are "a lot more off balance, not so rigid as the classical vocabulary."

Hill, a high school gymnast, started ballet training at the late age of 17 in Florida, where he grew up. Remarkably, only four years later, Mikhail Baryshnikov invited him to join American Ballet Theatre. He stayed six years, then, unhappy with what he saw as a negative atmosphere under Baryshnikov's directorship, left ABT for a brief stint with New York City Ballet before launching himself in 1988 as a guest artist.

"Every company needs a tall male dancer," he says, dismissing his own success on the circuit as "being tall is 99 per cent of it, talent is one per cent." Despite joining the Royal on a permanent basis next year, Hill hopes his career as an occasional visiting artist with other companies will continue. "There's a lot of work out there but a lot of it is not really interesting. A lot like *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake* is fortifying, and I decided to be more selective."

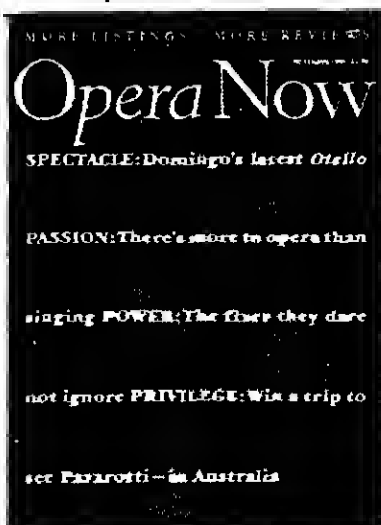
Tomorrow night he will partner rising star Darcey Bussell in the season's opener, *Prince of the Pagodas*. Next year his partners will include Sylvie Guillem and Altyai Asylmuratova. "It's very exciting for me to be in the Royal. This is a very reputable company and it says a lot in this business to be part of it."

His American expansiveness will set him apart from his colleagues, who tend to be more economical with their body language. "The British don't use the stage in the same way, they tend to cut underneath themselves. I know I move, I cover space. I know I have with my dancing people will see that things can be done differently and still with validity."



Darcey Bussell partnered by Robert Hill in rehearsal

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● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 27-33
● LAW 31
● SPORT 36-40

Executive Editor
David Brewerton

BUSINESS

THURSDAY OCTOBER 18 1990

Kleinwort faces halved profits after £30m loss on one deal

By JOHN BELL, CITY EDITOR

KLEINWORT Benson, the leading City merchant banking house, has taken a £30 million loss on a single share trade. The decision will cut the group's expected profits by half this year.

Though Kleinwort says that the initial decision to go ahead with the share deal was a collective one, Charles Hue Williams, joint managing director of the group's securities operations, has resigned.

The loss arose from the failure to find buyers for a 29 per cent stake in Premier Consolidated, the oil exploration and production group, which Kleinwort bought from Burmah Castrol in August. The transaction which failed was a so-

called bought deal, or block trade, in which a securities house buys a large share stake in the hope of breaking it up and selling it on to a number of institutional shareholders.

Kleinwort's block trade was conceived in the early aftermath of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that sent oil prices and oil shares soaring. But the terms were judged too aggressive by the market and Kleinwort was unable to sell its newly acquired stake.

Burmah agreed to sell its holding of 139.9 million shares in Premier on August 6 at a price of 95p. The deal netted Burmah £138 million, but from Kleinwort's position, the price was high. Bought deals are traditionally done at a

discount of 10 per cent or more. But Kleinwort paid a slight premium to the prevailing market price.

Worse still, Mr Hue Williams and his team attempted to place the shares at 103p, a further premium to the market price.

After meeting strong resistance from potential buyers, the placing was aborted. "They were being too greedy," was the verdict of one trader at the time.

David Peake, Kleinwort's chairman, said yesterday: "There is no doubt that this was a misjudgment of the market." Although Mr Hue Williams, a former partner of Wedd Darlacher, the jobbing firm, and Kleinwort's most senior market-maker, was most closely identi-

fied with the deal, Mr Peake said that the transaction "went through all the usual procedures".

The risk of £138 million required the highest approval within Kleinwort. It represented no less than 27 per cent of shareholder funds.

Since August, interest costs of the Premier holding have been mounting up at the rate of about £400,000 per week. Total carrying costs came to about £4.5 million when the shares were sold yesterday.

Mr Peake would not be drawn on the role of other market-making firms during the period when Kleinwort was an enforced holder of Premier. But there is a widespread view that rivals made

little effort to mark up Premier shares even during the time when oil prices were rising sharply. Some traders were said to be revelling in the discomfort of a competitor. "It would not be right for us to whinge," said Mr Peake.

After calling in Cazenove, the broker with unrivalled placing power among institutions, Kleinwort bowed out yesterday from its burden by selling its stock at 78p, a discount of 10 per cent on overnight price. The capital loss was more than £29 million.

Despite strong market suggestions that the merchant banking group might trim back or even close down market-making operations after the heavy loss, Mr Peake stressed that Kleinwort's strategy re-

mained unchanged - even towards bought deals. "They are part of the business we are in. We have done them successfully in the past and shall do so again," he said.

One of the few consolations for Kleinwort came from Roland Shaw, the chairman of Premier. "I have the utmost regard for Mr Hue Williams and I am sorry that the deal was unsuccessful. But Kleinwort acted with the highest standards throughout. I am certain that they could have gone out and found a predator to pay a higher price."

● In an unrelated move, Kleinwort is transferring part of its Japanese warrant trading operation to Tokyo with a possible loss of 25 jobs in London.

Highland links with Cointreau

HIGHLAND Distilleries, the Famous Grouse whisky producer, and Remy Cointreau, the French cognac and champagne group, have agreed a £75.9 million share deal, under which Highland acquires convertible bonds, which will translate into a 20 per cent stake in Remy Cointreau.

Highland has agreed to sell its 12.7 per cent holding in Macallan-Glenlivet to Remy Cointreau as part of the deal. Brian Ivory, the managing director of Highland, said the deal would lead to a greater European sales effort by the company and would also allow it to participate in the distribution earnings.

Drinks deal, page 29

TIP Europe up

TIP Europe reports pre-tax profits swollen by acquisitions and a change in accounting policies from £12.7 million to £15.5 million for the year to end-July. A 3.6p final dividend makes a total up by 0.3p to 5.3p.

Jim Cleary, the chairman, rejected suggestions that his group was in financial difficulties which have prompted an abrupt slide in the share price. Tempus, page 29

Record for Pict

Pict Petroleum reports record net profit of £2.3 million for the year to the end of June, compared with losses of £399,000. Earnings of 6.22p a share compare with a deficit of 1.45p. There is again no dividend. Tempus, page 29

THE POUND

US dollar 1.9650 (+0.0080)
German mark 2.9691 (+0.0032)
Exchange index 95.0 (same)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1600.8 (-12.5)
FT-SE 100 2068.0 (-15.6)
New York Dow Jones 2405.69 (+24.50)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 23859.36 (+253.26)
Closing Prices ... Page 33
Major indices and major changes Page 31

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 14%
3-month interbank 13½-13¾%
3-month eligible bills 13½-13¾%
US: Prime Rate 10%
Federal Funds 7½-8%
3-month Treasury Bills 7.16-7.14%
30-year bonds 96½-98½%

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
£ \$1.9650
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£ Sfr1.2735
£ FF5.9517
£ Yen125.20
£ Yen125.20
£ Yen125.20
ECU 0.694029 SDR 10.73736
£ ECU1.440861 £ SDR1.355488

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London Fixing: AM \$365.75 pm \$366.00
close \$366.50-367.00 (£186.00-186.50)
New York: COMEX \$366.70-367.20

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Nov) \$37.80bbl (\$38.25)
Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Buyers	Sells
Australia \$	2.56	2.40	
Austria Sch	21.85	20.50	
Belgium Fr	2.99	20.00	
Canada \$	2.99	2.24	
Denmark Kr	11.84	11.14	
Finland Mk	10.35	9.75	
France Fr	3.05	2.95	
Germany DM	3.05	2.95	
Greece Dr	330.00	260.00	
Hong Kong \$	15.92	14.92	
Ireland P	1.16	1.09	
Italy Lira	260.50	245.00	
Japan Yen	120.00	110.00	
Netherlands Gld	3.28	3.20	
Norway Kr	12.03	11.30	
Portugal Esc	205.25	225.25	
South Africa Rd	5.20	4.70	
Spain Ptas	163.00	161.00	
Sweden Kr	11.47	10.80	
Switzerland Fr	2.61	2.45	
Turkey Lira	542.00	543.00	
USA \$	2.52	2.43	
Yugoslavia Dnr	25.30	15.50	

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Retail Price Index: 129.3 (September)

James set to take helm at Dan Air

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the City's toughest and most successful troubleshooters has been asked to take over the running of Dan Air as part of a two-year plan aimed at saving the airline.

Talks on the planned takeover were going on late last night and if successful, David James, who has rescued a string of leading industrial companies, will take over next week. The negotiations follow a series of meetings with Dan Air's bankers, who insisted on top-level changes in return for guaranteeing to back the company for the next two years.

If Mr James, who this year was brought in as chairman of Eagle Trust to rescue the company after its shares were suspended when the fraud squad was called in, accepts the proposal, he is expected to demand a drastic change in the structure of the airline. He is likely to place greater emphasis on scheduled services and a smaller fleet.

Mr James' precise role was still being defined last night in talks with Davies and Newman. He would become at least chairman of Dan Air Services and may be appointed to the Davies and Newman holding board in place of Fred Newman, the group chairman, who has been in overall charge since 1966.

The sale of Dan Air's engineering base at Gatwick, for which an agreement in principle has been reached with a non-airline group, but which

has yet to be signed formally, will be a priority.

However, this deal has been thrown into doubt by the decision of Harry Goodman's Air Europe to withdraw from a contract for the company to maintain its fleet of Boeing 757 jets. The contract, representing between 15 and 20 per cent of Dan Air's engineering work and produced profits of about £4 million a year, was subject to cancellation if Dan Air sold the base or even threatened to do so.

Mr Goodman, the chairman of International Leisure Group, which owns Air Europe, said: "We asked if they could give us a guarantee that any of our aircraft which were trapped in the hangar in the event of a closure would be returned to us, and we did not get such a guarantee. We therefore decided to pull out."

"We have learned over the last 18 months that people can disappear around us and have lost a very great deal as a result of the demise of Paramount and Exchange Travel. We are now not prepared to give business to anyone unless we are sure of their future."

Air Europe's stance follows a similar decision by ILG's tour operating group not to use Dan Air aircraft this winter or next summer, leading to allegations that Mr Goodman was trying to hasten the demise of Dan Air so he could pick up its remaining routes. The allegations were denied by Mr Goodman, but he added: "If it was to be a question of them or me, I was deter-

mined it would not be me."

While ILG was taking action against Dan Air, the Dan Air board was putting forward a business plan to Lloyds Bank in the hope of obtaining cash guarantees to provide a breathing space while the company was reorganised.

The bank backed the plan yesterday, but with conditions. It insisted that a senior management structure be created to coincide with the switch in the airline's headquarters to Gatwick next month. Sir Ian Pedder, Dan Air's chairman, would be ousted with many executives if Mr James moved in his own team.

Dan Air's troubles stem from the collapse of the holiday charter market. The airline had no direct links with a tour operator to guarantee passengers. Then tensions in the Gulf more than doubled fuel prices.

The banks have been worried about the dwindling returns from Dan Air's charter operations and the Civil Aviation Authority has studied the airline's finances.

If Mr James takes over, he will have to shed many of the older jets in Dan Air's fleet, whose fuel consumption is now much greater than rival airlines with more modern aircraft. At today's fuel prices, it costs £138 per seat to fly an older Boeing 727-200 to Tenerife and back compared with \$81 per seat in a 737-400 and \$83 in a 757.

Comment, page 29



In line for another hot seat: David James, City troubleshooter, looks at Dan Air

Waterford strike adds to losses

WATERFORD Crystal's 14-week strike during the summer sent the Waterford Wedgwood crystal and fine china group deeper into loss in the first half of 1990.

The strike was primarily responsible for a loss of £14.6 million (£13.2 million) at Waterford, and inflated group losses by an estimated £10 million to £18.3 million, against a loss of £10.6 million a year ago, and will also have an impact on the second-

half figures. There will be no interim dividend.

The deal with the Irish workforce is expected to result in substantial production cost savings. Paddy Byrne, group chief executive officer, said: "The results do not show the complete picture. There has been real improvement in the condition of the businesses that, given time, will accrue to shareholders."

The refinancing last spring, which saw Tony O'Reilly's

Fitzwilliam consortium take a 29.9 per cent stake, injected £196.2 million of new cash, cutting net debt from £145.3 million to £124.9 million, and reducing gearing from 200 per cent to almost 20 per cent.

The British-based Wedgwood interests did well to achieve profits of £12.7 million, against £18 million. Most of the downturn was attributable to currency translation.

Tempus, page 29

Carpetland buyout runs into snags

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

THE management buyout of the 119 Carpetland shops from Lowndes Queensway, the group that went into receivership in August, has run into difficulties over the funding of the deal.

The buyout team, which is headed by Ray Nethercott, managing director of the carpet division, approached Kingfisher, the retail group, and had been optimistic that it would receive Kingfisher's backing.

But sources inside Carpetland said that Kingfisher decided not to go ahead with the deal, which was expected to proceed in the next few weeks. Kingfisher refused to comment.

The management buyout team, which has spoken to a number of potential backers, including the 3i and Continental European groups, is said to be looking for less than £10 million and is now considering widening the buyout to include taking some of the remaining 54 Queensway furniture stores as well as the Carpetland business. The management team is believed to be the only group considering taking the complete business.

● Manpower, the former Blue Arrow employment group now attempting to relocate across the Atlantic to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has warned shareholders that it may have to accept less than the £106 million sum already agreed if the company is to sell most of its non-Manpower businesses in this country (Martin Waller writes).

The announcement sent the shares 3p lower to 49p. The deal, a buyout of the Brook Street agency and four other businesses, was announced last month. Last week, the market learned of problems with financing.

Buyouts failing, page 28

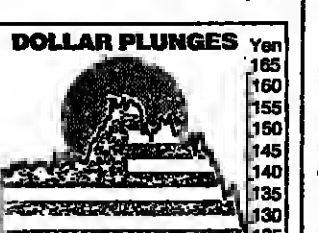
Yen and mark set record over dollar

By ANATOLE KALETSKY

ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE dollar hit a record low against the Deutschmark and fell even more precipitously against the yen after senior policymakers in Washington and Tokyo expressed indifference about the American currency's decline. By the close in London, the dollar was down more than two yen and about ½ pfennig. It recovered slightly in early New York trading, responding to stronger than expected figures on industrial output, but it remained well down on the day, especially against the yen.

The American currency hit its lowest point of DM1.5040 and ¥124.80 before lunch in London as traders reacted to steep overnight falls in Tokyo and comments by Nicholas Brady, the US Treasury Secretary, who said in Wash-



ington on Tuesday night that the dollar's fall was "not something we are overly concerned about".

By lunchtime in New York the dollar's decline was halted by the publication of stronger than expected economic figures.

At mid-day in New York, the dollar traded at ¥125.50 and DM1.5125. Sterling was mostly sidelined in the foreign exchanges, trading almost unchanged at \$1.9620 and DM2.9670.

Severn Trent may let Caird bid lapse

By MARTIN BARROW

SEVERN Trent, the privatised water company, is reviewing its 100p a share cash offer for Caird Group and may allow the bid to lapse.

Representatives of Samuel Montagu, the merchant bank acting for Severn Trent, have discussed with the Takeover Panel the possibility of reducing the value of the bid or allowing it to lapse.

Caird has recommended Severn Trent's offer for the ordinary shares, which values the company at £78 million, but rejected the terms for the convertible preference shares. Caird shares fell from 93p to 70p.

The company has also downgraded its profit forecast for the 18 months to the end of December from £8.5 million before tax to £7.2 million,

while an unaudited statement shows the value of net assets unchanged at £54.1 million.

Provisions of £3 million have also been made in respect of anticipated losses and closure costs within Caird's joint venture property development companies.

Severn Trent, which now holds almost 30 per cent of Caird's ordinary shares, reserved the right to withdraw its offer should the company fail to reaffirm its original profit forecast, which was issued in September as a profit warning, provoking the fall in Caird shares which preceded the bid.

A Severn Trent statement noted "with disappointment" Caird's announcement and said the extraordinary losses were "viewed with concern."

Ex-chairman ran stock exchange 'like private club'

From LULU YU IN HONG KONG

RONALD LI, one of Hong Kong's most influential businessmen and former chairman of the colony's stock exchange, was convicted on corruption charges in the high court yesterday.

Mr Justice Bokhary, who presided over the six-week trial, is to pass sentence today. Li faces other charges under the prevention of bribery ordinance with six other former exchange members. Li's conviction was a famous victory for the prosecutors, who sought to stamp out irregularities of an era in which the stock exchange was run like "a private club" and deals were extrajudicially by officials who made or bent the rules.

Li, the 60-year-old billionaire and devout Anglican, closed the exchange for four days after Black Monday, a move which dented Hong Kong's image as a serious financial centre for international investors. When the exchange reopened

on October 26, 1987, the market suffered its biggest one-day fall and the futures exchange collapsed and was bailed out at a cost of HK\$4 billion (£264 million).

Li stepped down as chairman of the exchange in December 1987 and stayed on as one of five vice chairmen until he was arrested by anti-graft officers on January 2, 1988. In a report by Mr Ian Hay Davison, the British regulator brought in for a six-month review of the financial market, Li was found to have run the exchange like a "private club", locking out foreign institutions and accountable only to himself.

The government has since embarked on a complete overhaul of the system, resulting in new management for the exchanges, stricter securities regulations and the establishment of an independent Securities and Futures Commission. Li, once rated the third richest man in Hong Kong, with a personal fortune of HK\$14 billion, belonged to a different, more

freewheeling, era. When he started as a broker, he was barred from joining the old British-run Hong Kong Stock Exchange. In defiance, he founded the Far East Stock Exchange in 1969. It rivalled the existing exchange and championed local brokers against international firms. Two more exchanges developed.

In 1986, Mr Li masterminded a merger of the four small exchanges into one. He was voted chairman and often used his clout to defeat unwanted rules.

During the trial, Li was accused of abusing his position as chairman to make a personal profit of nearly HK\$80,000 from corrupt share deals. He denied there was anything wrong with asking for shares from companies whose listings he had just approved. After 10½ hours of deliberations the jury convicted him by a majority vote of 5-2 of accepting the shares of Cathay Pacific Airways and Novel Enterprises for supporting their listings in 1986 and 1987.

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CBI unveils tax relief plan to boost share ownership

By ROSS TIEMAN
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A CONFEDERATION of British Industry task force is calling for tax relief of £1,200 a year on personal share investments as part of a long-term strategy to encourage the British to buy more shares.

Companies should be allowed to advertise their own shares and should expand employee share ownership, it says.

The confederation adds that the International Stock Exchange should join the companies in a share marketing campaign while mounting a determined effort to cut dealing costs for small investors.

The proposals are among a broad range of measures urged in a report, "A Nation of Shareholders" from the CBI's wider share ownership task force yesterday.

They are needed, it says, to reverse a sharp decline in the proportion of shares owned by individuals. Sir Peter Thompson, chairman of the task force, said the strategy is vital to the health of Britain's economy and society.

He was supported by John Banham, director general of the CBI, who said: "The vast bulk of our fellow citizens do not understand the wealth creation process."

Control over British quoted companies had become con-

ALISTAIR GRANT



Expansive move: Sir Peter Thompson (left) and John Banham of the CBI yesterday

centrated in the hands of about 60 fund managers, he added.

The CBI report says that the proportion of British listed equities held by individuals, by market value, has fallen from 38 per cent in 1975 to 28 per cent in 1981 and 20 per cent today. Only 300,000 owned a balanced portfolio of ten or more shares.

Despite privatisations, "millions of people have

never traded in the secondary market", said Sir Peter. "They just sat there holding privatisation shares and neither, our survey showed, did they know how to trade them."

The task force report blames stock market structures, a failure to market shares, and tax incentives favouring investment in houses and pensions.

The report will be discussed at the CBI's annual conference

at Glasgow in November. If adopted, it will become the policy of the employers' organisation.

The report says the proposed income tax relief on direct share investments of up to £100 a month for a limited period would cost the Treasury £300 million a year if one million people took advantage of it. It is modelled on highly successful schemes in France and America.

Groveswood offers £5m for Priest Marians

By MATTHEW BOND

GROVESWOOD Securities, the property group run by David Holland, the former chairman of Randworth Trust, has finally made its long-awaited bid for Priest Marians Holdings, the London property company.

Groveswood is offering one of its shares for each ordinary share in Priest Marians. Additional Groveswood shares are being placed with institutions at 35p each to raise £13.75 million of working capital. At 35p the loss-making Priest Marians is valued at £5 million.

The deal represents a huge loss for JMB Realty, the American property company. Last November JMB paid 380p a share for the 25.1 per cent stake owned by Simon Fussell, Priest Marians' former chairman. It later took its stake up to 28.3 per cent at a total cost of over £14 million.

Yesterday the Groveswood bid valued the JMB stake at just £1.3 million. The bid was accompanied by interim figures for Priest Marians, which revealed that in the six months to March the company made pre-tax losses of £20.8 million. The company also has current net borrowings of £130 million.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Retraction by BZW on Maxwell Corp

BARCLAYS de Zoete Wedd has been forced to retract statements made in its morning briefing note about the profitability of Maxwell Communication Corporation after a complaint from the group.

BZW had claimed earlier this month that disposals announced recently would weaken the group's prospects. An apology published yesterday said the disposals programme will now increase attributable profits for Maxwell in the financial year to the end of March. The dispute is similar to one between Maxwell and James Capel this summer, at which the publisher forced a retraction of remarks made internally by the broker and reported in the press.

Brabant draws private funds

PRIVATE investors have shown interest in one of the few companies to join the Unlisted Securities Market this year. They subscribed for 550,800 shares in Brabant Resources, 5.1 per cent of the 10.8 million new shares being issued. The oil and gas exploration concern is raising £16 million via a placing and offer, at a cost of almost £854,000. The shares are being issued at 155p.

Air London in 5% rise

AIR London International, the air charter broker that came to the unlisted securities market via a placing last November, has reported a 5 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £822,000 for the year ended in July. The company saw turnover improve 28 per cent to £13.4 million, although earnings slipped by 7 per cent to 6.2p. A final dividend of 1.4p makes 2.5p for the year.

Go-ahead for Ranger

RANGER Oil (UK) has received Department of Energy approval for the development of the Anglia offshore gasfield in the North Sea's southern gas basin. The Anglia field is expected to produce 50 million cubic feet of gas a day from December next year. Gas will be sold under short-term contracts to Kinetic Ltd, BP Gas Marketing and Associated Gas Supplies.

Long-term supplies are intended for Anglia Power and Gas, a Ranger-operated project to develop a 350-megawatt gas-fired electrical generating plant. Ranger, a subsidiary of the eponymous Canadian-based group, has a 35.63 per cent interest in the field.

Profits fall at Bourne End

A SURGE in interest costs took its toll on profits at Bourne End Properties, the property investor. Pre-tax profits fell from £347,000 to £65,000 in the half year to end-June. Group interest payments were £1.25 million, compared with a gain of £214,000 last time. Earnings per share fell from 3.5p to 0.77p but the interim dividend was maintained at 1p.

Cooper falls to £4.6m

FREDERICK Cooper, Britain's second largest supplier of window locks and door knockers, reported a drop in pre-tax profits from £8.7 million to £4.6 million for the year ended last July, in line with the forecast that accompanied last summer's open offer. The dividend, as expected, rises to 4p against 3.85p, with the recommendation of a 2.5p final.

Henry Boot advances

DAVID Boot, chairman of Henry Boot and Sons, the construction company, says there is no indication that public sector contracts will alleviate an increasingly competitive market for privately funded construction projects.

Despite this, Henry Boot has still managed to raise pre-tax profits by 26 per cent to £2 million in the six months to end-June. Mr Boot said the performance was a result of the company's lack of gearing and successfully completed property developments. The interim dividend was raised by 17 per cent to 7p (6p).

This year proving disastrous for many buyout deals

By JONATHAN PRYNN

MORE management buyouts and buy-ins went into receivership in the first half of this year than in the whole of 1989 and four times as many as two years ago, according to a review of the market.

Figures published by the influential Centre for Management Buyout Research show that 32 deals failed between January and June this year.

The figure for same period last year was 11 and for the 12 month period it was 27. Only eight deals went into receivership two years ago. In 1986, not a single buyout or buy-in was identified by the centre as a failure.

Buyouts have been hit by their high debt levels, typically three times the size of the equity element in the deals, and by their inability to refinance through flotations, because of the weak stock market, or by trade sales, because of the decline in acquisition activity. The difficulties facing buyouts have been reflected in changing financial structures. In deals carried out in the first six months of the year, the proportion of the funding provided in the form of equity or quasi-equity rose from 18.5 per cent to 24.8 per cent.

The current harsh economic climate is not all bad news for the buyout industry. Nearly ten per cent of deals in the first half this year originated from larger groups that had gone into receivership, the highest proportion since 1984.

Overall, the market saw continuing high volumes of deals, but of much smaller average sizes. In the first half, 271 deals were carried out, compared with the record 503 in the whole of last year. However, the average deal size fell from £14.8 million to £6.3 million. Brian Chiplin of the buyout centre said: "The market is still thriving at the smaller end."

LOFs has commissioned a 150,000-ton tanker, in a joint venture with Iroquois Ship-

ping Corporation, the group's holding company, to be built in Japan by Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding Company.

The company said the tanker will initially be time-chartered for a five-year period by Chevron Transport Corporation.

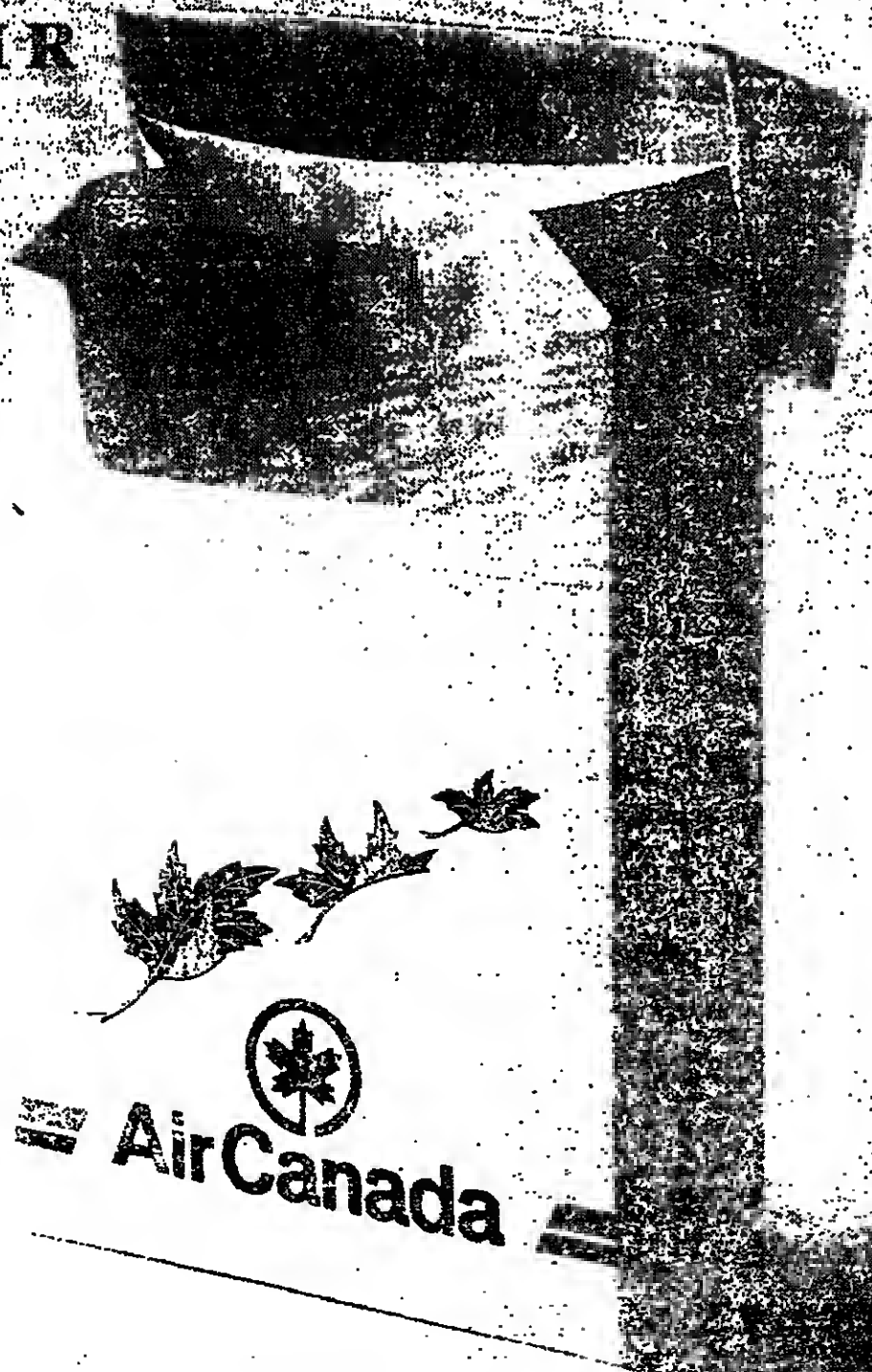
Market speculation suggests that a rate of about \$30,000 per day has been agreed, which is understood to be a very healthy deal.

The effective purchase cost of \$70 million will be paid in five instalments. The delivery date is expected to be during 1993.

Norex, the shipping and insurance group formerly known as Common Brothers, increased taxable profits from £2.4 million to £3.2 million during the year to end-June, despite a reduction in turnover from £48.56 million to £33.37 million.

Earnings rose from 14.07p a share to 18.12p. The company is returning to the dividend list, paying a total of 1p a share (nil paid in 1989).

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From October 1st, this clean, smoke-free environment applies to all routes from the U.K. to Canadian and European destinations. It's further proof that flying Air Canada is a breath of fresh air.

مكتبة الامارات

It is a view not shared by Mr Walker and his new management. They are determined to take advantage of the freedom afforded to British airlines to compete with each other in the increasingly liberal European aviation industry.

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

UNLISTED SECURITIES

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

PLATINUM

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began October 8. Dealings end tomorrow. §Contango day October 22. Settlement day October 29.
§Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields, and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (aa) denotes Alpha Stocks.

Dull trading

PLATINUM

Claims required for +26 points.
Claimants should ring 0254-53272

BRITISH FUNDS

249	295	Anglin Water	224	227	+1	20.4	8.0	5
250	296	Armstrong	220	224	+4	21.6	8.2	5
252	211 ^h	North West	227	230	+3	21.8	8.2	5
227	180	Savann Trest	193	195	+2	19.8	8.0	3
216	181	Salt Water	185	192	+7	20.0	18.3	4
253	202	South West	224	227	+3	21.2	8.0	3
249	208	Turkey Water	223	225	+2	19.4	8.4	5
253	214	White Water	242	249	+7	22.4	9.1	4
253	215	Yellow Water	242	245	+3	22.4	9.1	4
253	281 ^h	Yokohama Water	236	243	+7	20.8	9.6	5
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With an interest in basic accounting and computing, you'll enjoy becoming involved in the administrative side of this modern accounts department. Strong on WP skills, with experience of micro-computers, you'll need the ability to organise your own work, and the maturity to handle confidential material.

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You can depend on variety in your work, giving a full secretarial service to this department, using good WP skills, with audio and shorthand an advantage. You'll need the confidence and presence to deal with Senior Management as well as external clients. You will also need to become familiar with our database systems and to take an active part in compiling information and data from published material, libraries and other sources.

For both positions initiative, numeracy and literacy are a must. The WP software we use is WANG, and experience on this would be an advantage. Besides a very competitive salary, some of the benefits we offer are 23 days holiday, subsidised restaurant, subsidised health scheme, and pension scheme. Non-Smokers preferred.

To apply send CV's to Miss M. Young, Personnel Department, Costain Group PLC, 111 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7UE, or contact her on 071 928 4977 extension 8658. NO AGENCIES.

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Three immediate secretarial vacancies to join prestigious European Bank based in the City by the river offering mortgage, salary, lunch allowance, PPF and paid overtime.

CORPORATE FINANCE £15,000

An excellent position for a young secretary to work as Director level - previous Corporate Finance experience is essential. Very varied role - must have fast accurate WP - shorthand would be useful. Age 23 - 35.

TEAM SECRETARY £15,000

This is a position for a well presented, good "all round" secretary reporting to a charming Director and assisting his team. Shorthand or audio and excellent WP skills are essential to ensure this position. Previous banking experience would be an asset. Age 23-35.

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New size to five positions for young team secretary reporting to our Manager and team of two No shorthand - just excellent WP skills and good presentation. Age 21 - 30.

PHONE ANGELA ON 071 379 6240



RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Our client is looking for a young team secretary reporting to our Manager and team of two No shorthand - just excellent WP skills and good presentation. Age 21 - 30.

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£17,000 + Mortgage Subsidy + Free Lunches/Drinks + Bonuses + Insurance + Medical Cover (Package circa £24,000)

...have you just got back from working as a Secretary in France? ...or maybe you speak to France daily in your job now? ...the miserable interest rates are still sky high and you really need help with your Mortgage ...but you so want to use your fabulously fluent French. STOP. WAIT. Your dream job has just arrived to cure all these problems. From a veritable palace in St. James's, SW1 (these offices are elegantly furnished) this fabulous MD and his fascinating team, who all pull together, need you. Provided your French is good enough to write it, joke in it, understand people down the track in the lines, type it, in fact live it AND you have 55 typing, are 25 to 40, are beautifully presented, your future prospects here are already planned. Probably the best Bilingual job in London.

50 Pall Mall SW1 London SW1W 0LB Telephone 071-425 9548

SECRETARY/PA Consultant Plastic Surgeon, Harley Street.

Secretarial qualifications. Audio, Word Processing understanding and enjoyment of patient contact important. Please send full CV to Box No 1694.

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The National Trust has worthwhile careers for secretaries interested in making a valuable contribution to the important work we do preserving all that is unique about Britain.

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This means that you'll need RSA II typing, audio skills and preferable shorthand as well as a strong desire to prove to us, and to yourself, that you care about our heritage.

It's challenging work but your involvement in the legal work of the National Trust means that you'll always be developing your skills.

So whether you already have a good deal of secretarial or legal experience, or you're a college leaver looking for your first job, we could have an opportunity to suit you.

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Please write with full career details or telephone for further information to: Kerry Cobley, Personnel Officer, The National Trust, 35 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AS. Tel: 071 222 9251.

Closing date: Friday 9 November

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Exceptional opportunity for a fluent French speaking P.A. to join this dynamic busy Director who travels extensively. You will need good organisational skills, good typing and be immediately prepared to complement their superb office.

PERSONNEL ASSISTANT £13,000 + Mortgage Sub

Large City bank need to find an outgoing lively young 2nd jobber to join their busy Personnel Dept. Good shorthand and WP skills a must with 5-6 years and a desire to progress into a career position. Great benefits including a mortgage sub.

For more excellent job opportunities in both City and West End call 071-285 5501

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Busy American Law Firm in Paris seeks an evening secretary with basic French but excellent English and keyboard skills. WordPerfect knowledge a plus. (No agencies).

Call 071-329-0779 and ask for Maureen Pocknell

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£15,000 + Pkg

Join one of the few Companies in London that is expanding. Be a PA to the Director MD & his account handling team - help to organise, coordinate, evaluate, plan, advise, etc. If you want to be one of the top secretaries, and 25-35, have 50 mpm call CAROLINE SYKES NOW!

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A Senior Director of a top City based Investment Fund Managers requires a proper P.A. locally speaking with 8-10 years' experience and an A level education. The position is very exacting and requires part of your duties will involve research of all company and company's Good prospects. Bonus £10K, BUPA, Non comm. pension.

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - PARIS
Cequ. £20,000

Our Marketing Headquarters located in Puteaux, Paris requires an Executive Secretary, fluent in at least French and English.

Responsibilities include the management and co-ordination of Secretarial and Administrative functions. In addition, you will provide secretarial assistance to the Director-General, organise international travel and reception of foreign VIPs and assist in arranging trade exhibitions.

You are likely to be educated to degree standard, with a minimum of 5 years senior secretarial experience, preferably within a multinational company (previous foreign assignments will be an advantage). Additionally you will possess a driving licence.

Please write, giving full career details plus a current CV to:

Charles Macdonald
Manager Human Resources - Europe
Honeywell Sperry Aerospace S.A.
Edison Road
Basingstoke RG21 2QD

Honeywell

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La Vie en Rose

Property Finance in SW1 to £17,000

If you enjoy working in the fast lane, in the top of luxury for a dynamic American MD, then this is the job for you. French speaking read on. He is seeking a high-powered financial negotiator & needs a first class PA with immaculate presentation & drive.

Exec Assistant £15,500

International Information Technology Co seeks experienced PA for their MD. Although there is a very high Admin content in this position, you will need excellent Shyping skills and fluency in French, German & any other European language.

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An exciting opportunity for bright PA (22-28) with fluent German, French & English (possibly German MT) to work in busy future Co. This is a varied position requiring good WP skills, a flexible personality & the ability to turn your hand to anything.

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Making the switch to a lighter note

Size and weight make the clarinet a difficult instrument for children to learn, but now there is a new design, Anthony Cox writes

When Graham Lyons presented his new clarinet to the professional music world at this summer's British Music Fair at Olympia, he claimed to have "a really busy stand — the fair absolutely proved the market".

The first of the commercially available Lyons C clarinets will roll off the production line this month at £129 — about half the cost of a traditional clarinet — in highly original cylindrical cases that can also be used as percussion instruments.

The new clarinet has been a long time in the making. Mr Lyons first thought of it in 1978, but found little support for the idea from the manufacturers of musical instruments.

Eventually he decided to try and raise the seedcorn capital from leading musicians that he could make the clarinet himself.

Twenty-two famous musicians, including Sir Charles Groves, John Dankworth and Humphrey

Lyttelton, agreed to give him their support.

According to Mr Lyons, an experienced woodwind teacher, the average seven-year-old can hardly hold the standard clarinet. "As a teacher, I could see the painfully slow progress of many children who were held back by the physical, not musical, problems of the clarinet," he says.

The Lyons clarinet is in the key of C, rather than the conventional B-flat of the standard clarinet, and weighs less than a third of the conventional instrument. He says it is easier, and more encouraging, to play. "It is also good for adult learners. In fact, it is good for ages seven to 11 and for people from 60 to 80," Mr Lyons says.

"The average seven-year-old will be able to get down to the lowest note on the new clarinet within a week and play over a range of two and a half octaves within two months. It would take two years to do that on a standard clarinet."

Mr Lyons has his marketing eye



An incentive to persevere: woodwind teacher Graham Lyons found that the weight of the conventional clarinet hindered learning, which affected enthusiasm

on the 2.5 million schoolchildren who play the recorder and the 70,000 to 80,000 children who take up — and all too frequently put down — the standard clarinet every year.

"I have been demonstrating the prototype of the C clarinet for a year and a half. Interest was slow to start with, but now is overwhelming. There has also been a

lot of interest from abroad," he says.

Teachers in nearly 40 education authorities have ordered the Lyons C. Critics of the new instrument say that it is not a "real" clarinet, mainly because of its lightness and plastic keys, but Mr Lyons challenges this view, as he does the criticism that there is a lack of suitable music for a C

clarinet. "There is probably 30 times more music available to the child. C is like sea level — it is a standard. Anyone with a C instrument can read any other C instrument part. Someone with a B-flat instrument is restricted. The C clarinet can also play B-flat clarinet music a tone up," he says.

Others have argued that learning the C instrument is a waste of

time if students then have to learn the B-flat clarinet in order to play in a wind band or orchestra. Mr Lyons's answer to that is that fewer than 10 per cent of students make that kind of progress. The great majority can happily play jazz or classical music and take grade examinations with the more simple C clarinet.

For Mr Lyons, aged 54, who was

sent down from Oxford when a physics student for playing jazz all the time, the new instrument is likely to produce greater numbers of B-flat clarinet players. "It is so much less discouraging for the beginner than the standard instrument," he says.

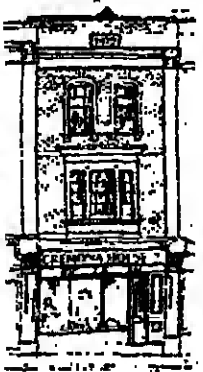
C. Lyons Clarinet Company, 37 Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LE (081-802 4125).

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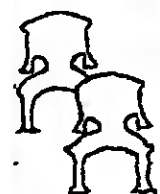
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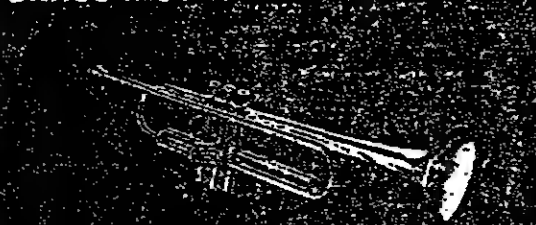
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grand prix from Reading: quarter-finals.
Screensport 10.00-12.00.
REUSE: Europe! 12.00-13.30 Yesterday's highlights from European Community championships in Belgium. **13.30-18.00** Live coverage of Porsche ladies' grand prix from Germany. **20.00-23.30** Live coverage of European Community championships.

Rejuvenated Anshan ready to continue the good work

By MANDARIN
(MICHAEL PHILLIPS)

ANSHAN, who began this season by winning the Free Handicap over seven furlongs at Newmarket in April, is now mapped to capture the Jameson Irish Whiskey Challenge Stakes over the same course and distance today.

That commendable first effort was followed by another in the 2,000 Guineas in which he finished third behind Topi and Machiavelli.

A bad run in the St James's Palace Stakes at Royal Ascot can be attributed to the fact that he had gone over the top as the result of being asked to tackle York's Dante Stakes over a distance that turned out to be too far.

After being given ample time in which to recover, Anshan was then brought back to today's distance at Goodwood 13 days ago when he ran out of most convincing

winner of the Select Stakes, beating that useful filly Palace Street by two lengths.

In the 2,000 Guineas Anshan finished seven places and almost seven lengths in front of Rami, who repossessed him today, also fresh from a long break and a morale boosting easy win on his comeback at Watwick ten days ago.

Well that I expect Rami to go here, it is arguable that the main threat to Anshan will be posed by the filly Sally Rous, who so nearly beat Green Line Express in the Kington Park Stakes at Doncaster last month. On that occasion Call To Arms, another of today's runners, was four lengths adrift in third place.

Early in the season, Sally Rous had won the Jersey Stakes over today's trip at Royal Ascot.

Sally Rous will be hard to beat if he was in the form that enabled him to win the

Lockinge Stakes at Newbury in May. But as he has rather lost his way since, I much prefer Anshan, who is quite capable of making all the running.

Well that his younger stable companion 'Great Design' should go in the A R Dennis Bookmakers Nursery following that successful debut at Salisbury earlier this month, I just favour Fanny Me with Pat Eddery aboard.

This William Jarvis-trained filly was the subject of a successful gamble last time out at Newcastle where she easily accounted for another John Gosden-trained two-year-old Knifecut.

When the runners for the EBF Chesterton Maiden Stakes appear in the paddock plenty of attention will be focused on Jendali, the new-comer from Henry Cecil's stable who is already being spoken of in terms of being

their hope for next year's Derby.

A son of the triple crown winner Nijinsky, Jendali is guaranteed to run well after a thorough preparation. But I just prefer Luca Cumani's Sharifabad, who gained what could easily turn out to be priceless experience when finishing a close fourth behind Environment Friend at the last meeting here.

Significantly, that race was run in a faster time than the other division in which Peking Opera, another fancied runner today, was beaten much more easily by Sapichia.

During Times, who was a convincing winner of a handicap over seven furlongs during the last meeting, is taken to a repeat performance in the Jeyes Handicap over the same trip.

Blinkered first time

NEWMARKET: 2.0 Jameson, 3.5 Northern Conqueror, 4.0 Frank Toss.

Dayjur at 6-4 with Ladbrokes

DAYJUR is 6-4 favourite with Ladbrokes to win the Breeders' Cup sprint at Belmont Park on Saturday week. Corals offer 6-4 on (George Rae writes).

"We take the view that Dayjur has plenty to overcome," Ladbrokes spokesman Mike Dillon said yesterday. "He has never raced around a bend and six furlongs on dirt can be testing."

The task facing Dayjur was underlined by Geoffrey Gibbs, the Jockey Club's senior flat handicapper. "Dayjur is the best sprinter we've seen in Europe for some years, but races in the United States can develop into a real scrap. He'll be taking on tough and experienced horses who are used to bumping and running."

Golden Pheasant, one of the leading American representatives in the Breeders' Cup, is home and will miss the sprint. Improving the prospects of a successful European challenge led by the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe winner Saumarez.

The final entries for all seven Breeders' Cup races will be announced next Wednesday.

Eddery on verge of double century after 97-1 treble

By RICHARD EVANS

PAT Eddery is set to become the first flat jockey to ride 200 winners in a season since Sir Gordon Richards in 1947, following a brilliant 97-1 treble at Redcar yesterday.

The champagne could be flowing at Newmarket this afternoon as the seven times champion jockey needs only two more wins to reach the double century mark. "I have got a couple of good rides on Anshan and Fanny Me who knows?" he said.

The 200 target has been in the back of Eddery's mind for a month but he realised he was on the verge of achieving it after a five-timer at York last Wednesday. "That put me close. Last week was good as I had nine winners. I can often slow up at

this time of year. It has gone well today and I am pleased."

For a brief moment yesterday it looked as though Eddery would be the unlikely setting for finding his 300th winner. After winning on Sixfours and making light of a poor draw to score on Chillyboy, Eddery had a 100 per cent record from his first two rides.

On his third ride, aboard Rio Pedras, Eddery was consistently denied a clear run in the final furlong. He eventually wiggled and weaved his way through a wall of horses and burst clear, only to be pipped in the last 50 yards by the fast finishing Affirmation, well ridden by John Williams.

Hills, who was taken to the Royal Wolverhampton Hospital suffering from pneumonia, will be replaced by Lester Piggott on Surrealist in the Dewhurst Stakes tomorrow and will also miss riding Carol's Treasure to Washington on Sunday.

Hills misses plum ride

MICHAEL Hills will miss the prize ride on the Ebor winner Surrealist in the Dewhurst Stakes tomorrow and will also miss riding Carol's Treasure to Washington on Sunday.

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UTTOXETER

Selections
By Mandarin

2.15 Chief Mole. 2.45 Worthy Knight. 3.20 Rocker. 3.50 Trusty Friend. 4.25 Off The Wall. 4.55 Pure Murey. 5.25 Bright Sapphire.

Going: good (watered) SIS

2.15 CHASE WINDOWS NOVICES HURDLE (22.60; 2m) (16 runners)

1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
2 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
3 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
4 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
5 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
6 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
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12 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
13 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
14 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
15 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5
16 1 122A NER OF EXETER 22 (N.J.) A Stronger 5-11-5

2.45 BRITISH COAL CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP CHASE (22.65; 2m 4f) (8)

1 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
2 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
3 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
4 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
5 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
6 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
7 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
8 4 485 CENTRE ATTRACTION 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10

3.20 BCB IN THE MIDLANDS NOVICES HURDLE (22.75; 2m 4f) (16)

1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
2 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
3 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
4 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
5 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
6 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
7 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
8 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
9 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
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11 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
12 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
13 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
14 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
15 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
16 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12

3.50 CORAL TRIP TO THE MIDLANDS NOVICES HURDLE (22.75; 2m 4f) (16)

1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
2 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
3 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
4 1 107 BURLEY HILL BOY 12 (N) T Caldwell 5-10-12
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3.50 UNDERGATE TERRA TIRE HANDICAP CHASE (22.83; 3m 2f) (8)

1 112 CROSS MASTER 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
2 1 112 CROSS MASTER 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
3 1 112 CROSS MASTER 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
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4.25 ABACUS LIGHTNING JUVENILE SELLING HURDLE (21.74; 2m) (16)

1 112 CROSS MASTER 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
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4.55 COMPUTER DISASTER RECOVERY HANDICAP CHASE (22.54; 2m 5f) (8)

1 112 CROSS MASTER 22 (D.F.) G Richards 11-11-10
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McMenemy pleads for future under-21 fixtures to return to the provinces

FA counts cost in the capital

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THE Football Association's decision to stage the England Under-21 European championship qualifying match at White Hart Lane on Tuesday night, proved ill-fated.

Only 2,146 saw Lewis McMenemy's team lose 1-0 to Poland in the first match of their campaign to reach the championship finals in 1992, and the FA is to undertake an immediate review of future venues for such fixtures.

The smallest gate for an under-21 international in England for at least seven years was five times lower than the attendance for last month's match against Hungary at The Dell, and McMenemy did not disguise his disappointment.

"It was not my decision to play in London," he said. "I think there is a strong case for taking these matches around the provinces where people are delighted at the chance of seeing international football. The lack of atmosphere certainly did not help us."

An England B fixture at Sunderland last spring attracted over 15,000, and providing local players were included, a similar gate would have been drawn to see the under-21 team.

The London public being asked by football is one problem: Tottenham's decision to fix admission prices at a minimum of £5 for standing and £6 for a seat — hardly an inducement to potential spectators — was another.

Those who turned up saw England succumb to a brittle Poland, who scored the game's only goal four minutes from time. McMenemy must have learnt that power and direction are no substitutes for guile and precision.

"Our passing was not good," he conceded. That was an understatement. England, who deployed the improving David Lee as sweeper, pushed Jason Dodd and Chris

Vinnicombe, the full backs, forward, but few accurate crosses were dispatched.

Likewise, too many of the long punts played through the middle, intended for Ian Olney and Mark Robins to run on to, reached the defenders. Such a strategy rendered the off-the-ball runs of Rodney Wallace virtually irrelevant, and England's best chance of scoring looked to be from a set-piece, or else long-range speculation.

Favouring rather more passes to feet and lingering longer in the midfield, Poland played a different game, and with Grad reveling in a roving attacking role, England experienced early discomfort.

But the visitors were knocked off the ball too easily, caught outside too frequently, and with Lee and Dodd prominent within the English rearguard, it was the hosts who dominated. Nevertheless, when Poland finally allied power to their pace, England's possession proved worthless.

McMenemy said: "Without saying that results are unimportant, the main objective of the under-21 side is to develop and produce players who will eventually represent their country at senior level."

Yet, with the likes of Alan Miller, Dodd and Mark Blake boasting only a handful of League appearances between them, there is a gulf between the two representative sides, and a full programme of B fixtures would surely prove of more use to Graham Taylor, the England manager.

It will be interesting to note whether or not John Ebbrell, Robins and Miller progress to full honours. Those three members of Tuesday's under-21 line-up were among the first batch of pupils to graduate from the FA's national football school at Lilleshall four years ago.



Chasing in vain: Mark Robins, of Manchester United, suffered a frustrating night

Romanian defence humbled

Creaney promises impressive future

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romania crashed to an embarrassing 3-0 defeat at the hands of Bulgaria here yesterday in their European Championship group three qualifier.

Goals from Shtakov, Todorov and Kostadinov, all three from fast counter-attacks, saw the visitors through a rough and tumble match in which four Bulgarians and one Romanian were booked.

By the end, the home crowd were booing and whistling a Romanian side which featured most of its World Cup squad, including the midfield player, George Hagi.

Beaten by Scotland and now Bulgaria, Romania are almost certain to miss the boat to Sweden in 1992.

● Feyenoord Rotterdam have agreed to pay an extra \$200,000 (£102,000) to Dynamo Bucharest to complete a swap and a row over loan Sabau's move to the Dutch club.

"We had a delegation from Dynamo here this week and made some concessions to settle the matter in a friendly fashion," the Feyenoord general manager, Martin Snoeck, said yesterday.

Sabau, a midfielder, player, joined Feyenoord after the World Cup but the two clubs have been in dispute. Last month Snoeck alleged the Romanian authorities had threatened Sabau, adding this was part of a campaign to extort a higher transfer fee.

The transfer is now a closed book and both sides are very pleased it has been cleared up. ● The Israeli international forward, Eli Ohana, has joined the Portuguese first division club, Braga, from Mechelen, of Belgium.

The Mechelen financial manager, Piet Derynck, said Ohana would play for Braga until the end of the season. Braga has the option for a permanent transfer.

Ohana, who has had trials for Nottingham Forest and Leeds United, joined Mechelen in 1987 but has not played this season after refusing a new contract.

● The Napoli captain, Diego Maradona, returned to Italy yesterday two days late from a holiday in his native Argentina after saying he wanted to return home to play for Boca Juniors.

Maradona, at Fiumicino airport in Rome, said: "No, I won't talk. First I've got to talk to [Napoli president Corrado Ferlaino]."

Maradona flew home to Buenos Aires last week on a four-day trip "for personal and family reasons," and had been under orders to report for training on Tuesday to prepare for a crucial league match against AC Milan, on Sunday.

He was expected to meet Napoli's general manager Luciano Moggi later yesterday.

Before leaving Maradona, whose contract with Napoli expires in 1993, said he wanted to return to Argentina soon to play for Boca Juniors.

Scotland may be short of senior forwards of international class, but they may have discovered one of the future at Dunfermline last night. Gerry Creaney, of Celtic, was the outstanding figure in an impressive overall team performance as Scotland Under-21 comfortably beat Switzerland 4-2.

Billy Findlay, of Hibernian, contributed two outstanding goals and Paddy Connolly, of Dundee United, hit the best of the night to round off the score, but they could not deflect the spotlight off Creaney.

His first touch in his first under-21 international resulted in a goal, three minutes into a game which sparkled with inventive football. The young Celtic, aged 20, who has taken the premier division by storm over the past month, also set up two of the other goals to cap a memorable start to his international career.

Switzerland, despite level-pegging at 2-2 during the second half, following two equalising goals from Marco Walker and Mario Fink, eventually found their hosts to be too difficult to contain.

Creaney was not alone in giving Scotland manager, Andy Roxburgh, good cause for optimism about the future. Findlay, Connolly and captain, Paul Lambert, all showed they have bright futures at the top level.

The Scotland coach, Craig Brown, predicted a bright future for his young players. Brown, right-hand man to Roxburgh, said: "I'm delighted and surprised by the performances they are giving."

"I was worried at the start of the season that so few of them had experienced in the premier division, but since then they have come through, and you can see the progress they are making. All four goals were the result of flowing moves."

Reading have sold their midfielder, Keith Knight, to non-League Gloucester City for £5,000. The 21-year-old was signed by Reading from Cheltenham Town for £7,000 two seasons ago and made 43 League appearances, scoring eight goals.

● The Wolverhampton Wanderers forward, Andy Munch, faces surgery on his injured knee. The Wolves manager, Graham Turner, said: "Andy has a bulging disc at the base of his spine and if the condition does not improve over the next ten days, the specialist will have to make a slice off the disc." Wolves are facing a minor injury crisis with Paskin, Bennett and Thompson all sidelined with knee injuries.

Robert Codner, sent home by the Brighton manager, Barry Lloyd, from the team's match before last Saturday's match at West Brom, was put in the reserves at home to Portsmouth last night. The 25-year-old midfielder, rated at £300,000, escaped a club fine after being

breaking a knuckle during the Rumbold Cup match with Walsall. Chelsea's manager, Bobby Campbell, is optimistic that the Northern Ireland forward will be available for Saturday's League game at home to Nottingham Forest.

● Gary O'Reilly, the Crystal Palace defender who scored in last season's FA Cup final against Manchester United, could be on the move to Swansea City. Palace have accepted an offer of £125,000 for the 29-year-old former Tottenham and Brighton player, and now O'Reilly must decide whether he wants to move to Vetch Field.

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RUGBY LEAGUE

Leeds date may cost Sheffield thousands

By KEITH MACKLIN

GARY Hetherington, the administrator and coach of Sheffield Eagles, reacted furiously to the draw for the preliminary round of the Regal Trophy which, he says, has robbed his club of thousands of pounds in gate receipts and potential sponsorship.

Leeds were drawn to play Halifax in the preliminary round, and the match will take place on November 18, the day when Eagles were due to entertain Leeds at their new Don Valley stadium.

A five-figure gate was expected, plus additional sponsorship and a television fee. Hetherington says all this will be seriously affected by the switch to a new date in mid-week, and he says that more care should be taken to ensure that cup draws do not seriously affect important matches in the Stones Bitter championship.

Many influential figures in rugby league would like to see top teams avoid the preliminary rounds of major trophies, a point supported by Hetherington and the British Amateur Rugby League Association (Barla).

However, the chief executive of the Rugby Football League, David Oxley, has argued that this would take away the luck of the draw and lay the League open to criticism that draws are biased and predictable with no element of surprise.

SWIMMING

New club to utilise raw talent

By CRAIG LORD

THE Scottish Amateur Swimming Association has overruled a district committee for the first time in more than 17 years to allow the formation of the RCP Swimming Club in Edinburgh.

Scotland's latest club, which will be based at the Royal Commonwealth Pool, will utilise the talents of some of the 4,000 children who are taught at the district council's swimming lessons each year.

The club's passage to affiliation has been rough, with the Eastern District twice voting against allowing the club to form. District committee members feared the group would overwhelm existing clubs in the city, although the district is not obliged to give specific reasons for refusing affiliation to the SASA.

However, an SASA executive committee meeting has decided to endorse the district, welcoming the club while stating that any problems which may arise as a consequence of the RCP club's existence, could be dealt with under SASA law, as was the case for all swimming clubs in Scotland.

William Black, the secretary of the SASA, said: "There were fears at district level that the RCP club might overwhelm existing clubs but given the figures that we have been provided with, which show that 4,000 children pass through lessons each year, it was thought the city could afford to house another club."

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Switzerland, despite level-pegging at 2-2 during the second half, following two equalising goals from Marco Walker and Mario Fink, eventually found their hosts to be too difficult to contain.

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RUGBY UNION

High-fliers look for glory with one eye on crowd

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WEST Hartlepool, having been greatly encouraged by their start to the season, will feel even better if they have replaced Clifton on Saturday at the top of the third division, after the match between the two clubs at Brierley Lane.

Clifton head the division, having won their three league games, whereas West Hartlepool dropped a point when they drew with Exeter 18-18 in the first league game of the season. Indeed it was only a penalty goal by Clifton's Armistead, kicked from a metre inside his own half, that saved the day on that occasion, which makes the failure of their place kickers the more ironic against Metropolitan Police last week.

Though West won 13-8, Armstrong and John Stabler, centre and stand-off half respectively, between them missed eight kicks. In the end the margin proved sufficient, but such wasted opportunities could make the difference against Clifton, in a match which sees Peter Robinson return to West's back row, instead of the injured Sean Cassidy, and Paul Whitlock, fit again after a knee injury, come in at light-head prop.

Seven years ago West lost 16-14 in the John Player Cup quarter-finals to Bristol (sub-

sequently winners of the cup) and they will recognise a couple of faces from that game, since Clifton include Phil Cud in full back and Peter Poldre in their back row.

But one of the north-east club's main concerns is to try to attract more spectators through their gate, commensurate with their league standing. Around 300 watched the game against the Police and, given their thriving junior section, West believe there should be more and are considering whether to offer free tickets to youngsters, if they are accompanied by an adult, in the hope of raising attendances.

It may be too early in the season to talk of promotion for West, given the competitive situation developing just below them in the third-division table. Sheffield and Broughton Park have dropped only one league match each and another northern club, Morley — strongly fancied at the start of the season — are just behind, coupled with Exeter on three points.

● Bristol, happy to have opened their first-division account for the season against Saracens last weekend, take the same XV on Saturday to Liverpool St Helens, struggling at the bottom of the table after three defeats in a row.

Penarth willing to sacrifice points

PENARTH may forfeit the chance of League points on offer against Aberystwyth on Saturday by playing two ineligible New Zealanders.

They are seeking permission from the Welsh Rugby Union to play the prop, Peter Clifton, and the back row forward, Bruce Murdoch, because of mounting injury problems. The club has 21 of their 45-strong squad out of action.

"We are in an absolutely desperate situation and we hope the WRU will let us play these boys," the club coach, Rob Harris, said.

"We don't mind if we have to forfeit points, but I'm not

prepared to allow us to take the field without specialist props — it would be too dangerous."

"The rules regarding overseas imports are absurd. As things stand, with certain clubs benefiting from the union's registration ruling, it's a complete joke. Either you can use these players or you cannot."

Penarth are unlikely to play Clifton and Murdoch if the WRU threaten the club with demotion, though.

"That would be a different ball game," Harris said. "We don't mind forfeiting points but we would certainly have a rethink if it meant dropping down a division."

HOCKEY

England's fortunes turn sour after penalty miss

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

England XI 2
Australian Institute 5

AN ENGLAND XI, somewhat hastily assembled, failed to consolidate on an early lead and provided the Australian Institute of Sport with yet another victory on their tour of Europe at Lillleshall yesterday.

It is typical of the game's vicissitudes that its fortunes can turn on a single incident, as it did yesterday when Lee's penalty stroke landed against a post in the fourth minute of the second half. The score should have been 2-2 but it was not long before the Australians increased their lead 3-1 to put themselves on the road to victory.

England made the kind of start they wanted with Roberts setting up a chance for Pidcock to score in the sixth minute. Within two minutes the Australians retaliated with a goal by Carter.

England counter-attacked strongly and Kirkland's shot from their fifth short corner brought Woods into action with

an acrobatic save. The visitors had better luck from their third short corner, which was converted by Williams in the 24th minute. He struck again with great force from another short corner in the 48th minute for a 3-1 lead.

Five minutes later there was a short corner again for the Australians and this time Elmer scored indirectly. Almost immediately Billson scored with a reverse hit for England from a centre by Pidcock, helped along by Roberts.

But any hope of an England revival was set aside with Dawkins following up after Langston had saved from Bodmeade to score the fifth goal for the Australians.

ENGLAND XI: A Forsythe (Bourville, sub: M. Langston, Wakefield); M. Kirkland (Stourport); P. Williams (East Grinstead); M. Chaudry (Stourport); J. Williams (Stourport); A. Degan (Stourport); R. Crutchley (Stourport); J. Pidcock (Stourport); M. Gress (Stourport); sub: A. Billson, Tiddington; P. Nall (Havant); J. Lee (East Grinstead).

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE: L. Woods; T. Williams; A. McDonald; O. King; L. Elmer; S. Dawkins; L. Bodmeade; O. Barnham; L. Carter; P. Lewis; S. Purnell (Australians); J. Bryan (England) and O. Gaboy (Australians).

Taylor cut from squad

SEAN Rowlands, who replaces Steve Taylor in goal, represents the only change in the Great Britain squad for the Champions Trophy tournament in Melbourne from November 17 to 25.

Bernie Cotton, the team manager, said: "We ought to put Steve Taylor on the back for his long service and commitment but inevitably the younger and bigger players have to be preferred."

The British team, which will leave London on November 4, will play two matches against Australia, on November 10 and

11, and meet Netherlands on the tournament's opening day.

GREAT BRITAIN SQUAD: Goalkeepers: S. Rowlands (Havant), O. Luckies (East Grinstead), O. Faulkner (Havant), capt.; S. Martin (Hollywood 87 and M. H.); J. Lawless (Teddington); J. Potter (Horseshow); S. Singh (Southgate); R. H. (Havant); J. Shaw (Southgate); R. Garshe (Havant); J. Kirkwood (Llangarney) and N. H. (Thompson (Horseshow), M. Thompson (St. Leonards); R. C. (East Grinstead); M. Garshe (Havant); O. Garshe (Havant).

● Great Britain beat Wellington 8-1 yesterday (Alix Ramsay writes). Three newcomers to the squad, Bayliss Wright and Robertson, were among the goalscorers.

YACHTING

Rusty can opener is a headache for Davie

THE biggest headache for Robin Davie, leading the Corinthian class in the BOC Challenge, the single-handed round the world race, is a blunt and rusting can opener (Barry Pickett writes).

